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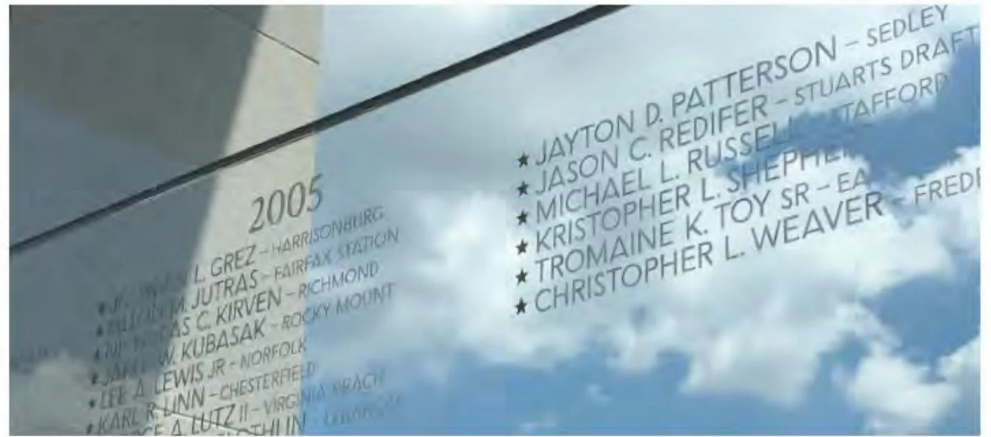
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Hillary



Matt



Ralph



Chummy



Hillary's Parents



Matt's Parents



Fritz



Billy



Teddy

Hillary had an important birthday looming and she was clueless what to get her husband, Matt. She had noticed ads for David Cochran's Family Portraits and she loved the casual and spontaneous way he depicted his subjects. This could be the perfect unexpected gift for Matt's 45th birthday.

She called Dave and invited him to their Maryland home to take a look at a specific wall and discuss the potential project. Hillary loved how easy Dave makes it for his clients. There are no live sittings, instead he uses the family's own casual photos as a resource. He frequently depicts multiple generations in a painting and consults with the client to suggest a personalized background.

The price seemed reasonable and Dave assured her that the painting would be complete by the approaching birthday party.

The final painting depicts a beach theme with their three boys at a crab feast. Both sets of parents are included along with an old photo of the boys digging a giant hole in the sand. Their bathing suits filled up with yucky sand so all attire was discarded and they headed to the ocean with miniature buns flashing (a favorite family story).

Matt was rendered speechless as the painting was unveiled at his party. He marveled at the many personal images represented, including his beloved dogs, wedding photo and his Dukati motorcycle.

Giclée prints were made of the painting and given to various family members.



Dukati



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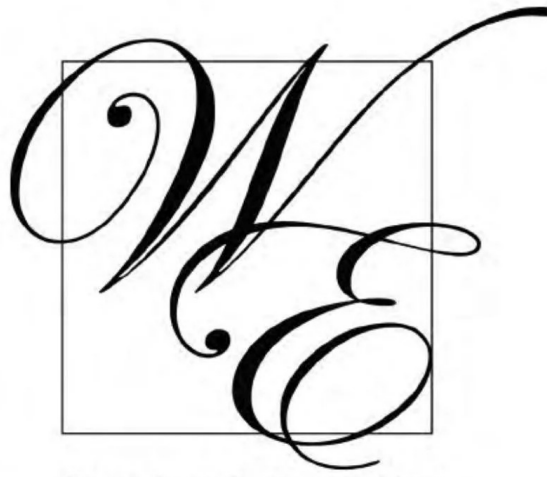


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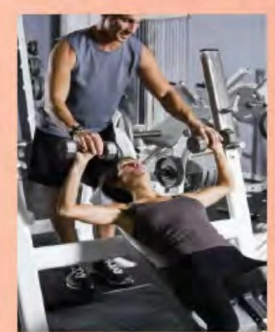
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ON THE COVER

Photo illustration by Jeff Satterthwaite / Getty Images

CORRECTIONS

In "The Man in the White Linen Suit?" (January 2025), we referred to Edgar Allan Poe's "baby sister"; Rosalie was his older sister. In "Rethinking Cherokee Road" (December 2024), we incorrectly stated the results of two suggestions for updating Cherokee Road. With the additions, the total width of the road would be 28 feet and 32 feet under the two solutions.

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EDITORIAL DIRECTOR: Mindy Kinsey

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR: Nicole Cohen

LIFESTYLE EDITOR: Kevin Johnson

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R*HOME MANAGING EDITOR: Susan W. Morgan

NEWS EDITOR: Mark Newton

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Kelsey Robinson

SENIOR WRITER: Harry Kollatz Jr.

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Paula Peters Chambers, Adam Cheek, Erica Jackson Curran, Kaitlin Davis, Stephanie Ganz, Tharon Giddens, Susan Higgins, Rachel Kester, Laura Anders Lee, David Lefkowitz, Diane Martin, Evan Morgan, Caleb Ogilvie, Holly Rodriguez, Genevieve Steele, Joan Tuppence, Lauren Vincelli

EDITORIAL INTERNS: Alyssa Hutton, Jenna Lapp, Melody Yuan

SENIOR ART DIRECTOR:

Rachel Lee

ART DIRECTOR:

Heather Palmateer

ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR: Kyle Talley

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS:

Abbi Bennett, Phong Nguyen

SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER: Jay Paul

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Justin Chesney, Ash Daniel, Adam Ewing, Marcus Ingram, Abigail Grey Johnston

CONTRIBUTING ILLUSTRATORS:

Iain Duffus, Carson McNamara, Jeff Satterthwaite, Justin Tran

SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE:

Martha Hebert

PRODUCTION AND OPERATIONS MANAGER: Scott Bunce

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF MARKETING,

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND CLIENT RELATIONS: R.J. Landin

SUBSCRIPTIONS ASSOCIATE: David Ballowe

VICE PRESIDENT/CONTROLLER: Elisa Malkman

EDITORIAL & ADVERTISING OFFICES:

1910 Byrd Ave., Suite 100, Richmond, VA 23230

MAILING ADDRESS:

P.O. Box 5070, Glen Allen, VA 23058

Telephone: 804-355-0111 Main Fax: 804-355-5442

Editorial and Art Fax: 804-355-8939 Email: editor@richmag.com

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from the
EDITOR
NINDY KINSEY



THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE

Whether it's witnessing historical happenings or predicting the outcome of future events, humans are fascinated by time travel. It's not enough to research the past or allow the future to unfurl; we dream of seeing and experiencing other eras.

The mission of our annual Sourcebook and Newcomers' Guide is to document Richmond today — the best places to go, things to do and services available, as well as the status of schools, neighborhoods, business and health care. We hope the issue will help current residents find something fresh to enjoy while aiding recent transplants as they settle into the city.

With this year's issue theme, The Future of Our City, we are also attempting a little time travel. In addition to our usual curated coverage of Richmond's offerings and amenities, we con-

sider what might be coming, what we'd like to see and evidence that the future is already right here.

Granted, some of our topics are not so much predictions as promises. The Allianz Amphitheater is under construction at the riverfront now and will be opening in a couple of months; we help you envision it with renderings and descriptions of the site and a run-down of the acts to come. Many other cultural offerings are in the works, including a new wing at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and a re-creation of Richmond's earliest known cottage belonging to a Black homeowner.

Arts organizations, restaurant owners, city residents and scientists all offer their prescriptions for the city's future success. Sci-fi fans may dream of flying cars and missions to Mars; Richmonders would appreciate more parking downtown, support and recognition

for local food spots, and bus shelter benches that don't burn your bum.

The technology-minded among us point to the rapid growth of data centers across the region to indicate the future is coming fast. Others talk about teaching AI in schools, equipping libraries with high-tech makerspaces and using apps to connect with arts opportunities and say the future is already here.

No trip through time would be complete without looking back to appreciate how far we've come. A 50-year effort has transformed the James River from one of the world's most polluted rivers to one of the most improved, and an upcoming exhibition will detail the horrors of the slave trade. We also applaud good ideas that have endured, including expertly designed gardens and a beloved neighborhood cafe. Enjoy the journey! ■

CONTRIBUTORS



ADAM EWING
Based in Richmond, photographer Adam

Ewing has a range of advertising and editorial photography clients across the U.S. and abroad. He also works in digital illustration, combining 3D and illustration work for editorial and commercial clients. He created the portraits on Page 28.



KAITLIN DAVIS
A writer based in Richmond, Kaitlin Davis has a passion

for community, health and well-being, the topics she covers most often as a freelancer. She writes residential real estate content professionally and has contributed to Fortune 500 companies including Rocket Mortgage. She enjoys boxing, plant keeping and cooking. Davis' story about The Well Collective starts on Page 124.



IAIN DUFFUS
Freelance illustrator and designer Iain Duffus

lives just south of the James River. When he is not working in the studio, he is enjoying the garden, lounging with family or smiling at a baseball field. Duffus illustrated the article about local markets on Page 218.



ERICA JACKSON CURRAN
A native of central Virginia,

Erica Jackson Curran has lived in Charleston, Boston and Bordeaux, France, but RVA is her favorite. She writes about topics like travel, cocktails and parenting for publications including HuffPost, Wine Enthusiast and Afar. Curran interviewed rising stars for the Welcome section (Page 28).



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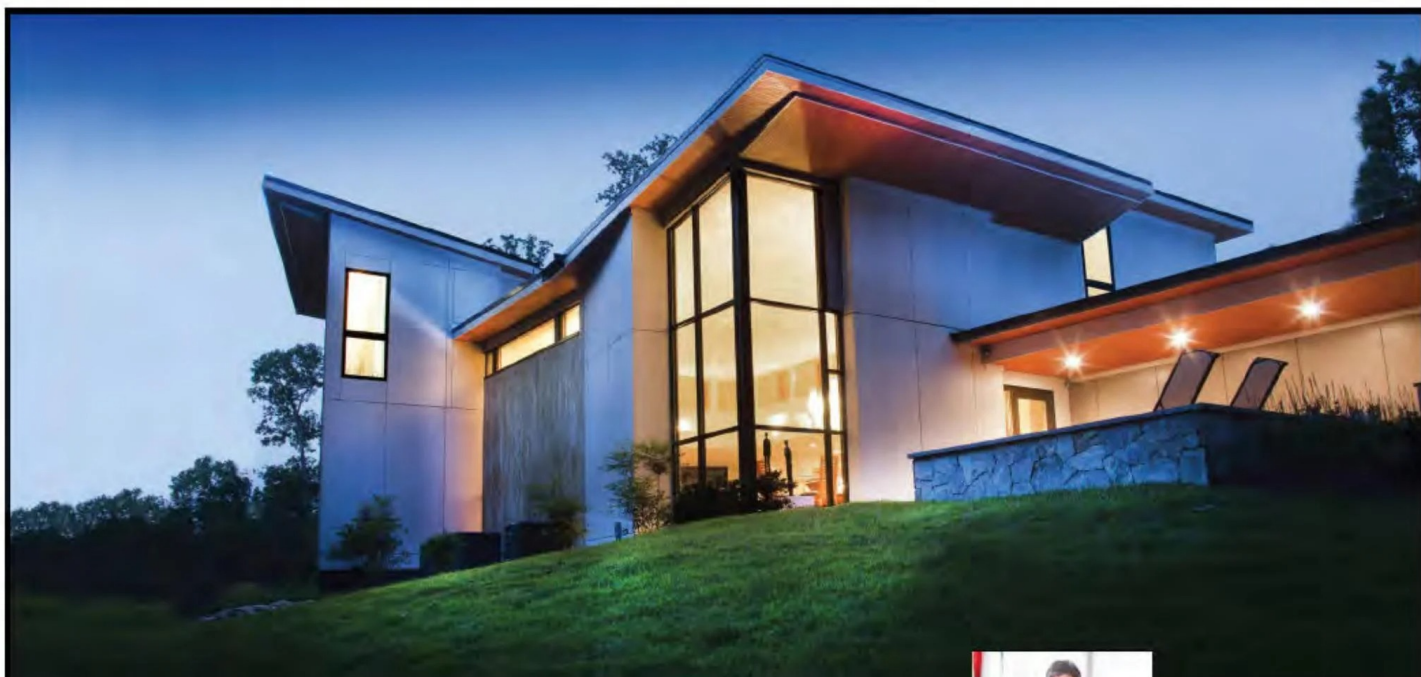
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from the
PUBLISHER
RICHARD MALKMAN



NEWCOMER

This issue, our Complete Sourcebook, is also known as the "newcomers' guide." It's one of my favorite issues of the year, because I was a newcomer here back in the day, too.

I moved to Richmond from New York City. Although it was just 350 miles, it seemed as if my wife and I were migrating here from another world. I kept wondering how I was going to fit in with my very Northern accent in a city of very Southern accents. Back then, I never said "y'all" in my everyday speech; I used words like "yo" and asked, "How's yous guys?" I don't say that much anymore, because I am now a Southerner and use phrases like, "bless your heart."

In New York, people were known by their first names, such as Anthony, Marie or Richie. Southerners use first and middle names, and it seemed to me that many Richmonders had Bob as their middle name, like Billy Bob and Joe Bob. My middle name is Howell, so I would take Bob any day.

My Southern friends introduced me to all kinds of new foods. They introduced me to spoonbread the first week I was in town, and don't forget the hush puppies! I started eating lots of fried chicken and waffles with plenty of

honey. I fit in very quickly because all I ate in New York were pizza and hot dogs from street vendors.

My wife, Elisa, wasn't sure about moving from the big city. New York was her home, and she and I had large families there. Come to think of it, that was the reason I wanted to leave: I felt that we needed to be on our own and create a life for ourselves with-

out involving everyone else. Besides, the family couldn't cook grits the way my new friends could, and they couldn't make barbecue ribs and stewed tomatoes, either. Perhaps the food is what has kept me here all these years. New York may have Coney Island hot dogs and knishes, but Richmond has something far better tasting for me.

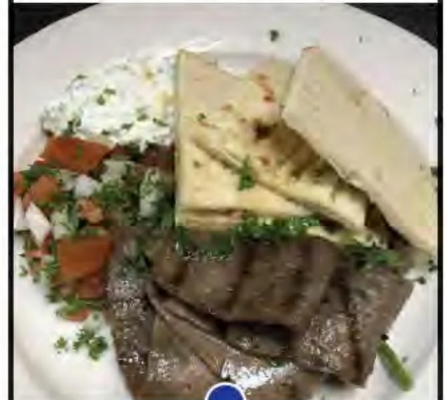
Maybe it's the Southern drawl I love so much, or perhaps it's the Southern charm and politeness I got used to. Any way you look at it, I think I made the right move in 1975 when I became a newcomer in this city. The streets are much narrower and quieter than the streets I grew up on, and you can't find a cab here if your life depended on it, but even knowing that, I wouldn't trade Richmond for any other city in the world.

Welcome to Richmond, newcomers.
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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: CAROLINE MARTIN; CHARLES WILLIAMS; COURTESY RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY



Changed for Good

MEET A FEW PEOPLE HOPING TO REWRITE

RICHMOND'S FUTURE BY ERICA JACKSON CURRAN AND MINDY KINSEY

Attributed to the newspaper mogul William Randolph Hearst, the phrase “If it bleeds, it leads” has represented the prevailing media philosophy in the U.S. since the 1890s. In today’s hyperconnected world, that means people tend to see a lot of coverage about crime and view the world pessimistically because of it, despite dramatic declines in both violent and property crimes over the past 30 years, according to Pew Research.

However, perhaps the popularity of dance TikToks, Poppy the pygmy hippo, kitten memes, #payitforward, “The Great British Baking Show” and the Good News Movement presage a future where people focus on the positive. Like nudging a mirror for a different view or zooming a lens to change a camera’s focus, we could adjust our perspective by emphasizing the happier headlines instead of wallowing in the worst.

One way of flipping the script is to recognize and celebrate the exper-

tise, leadership, service, determination and sheer hard work happening all around us — arguably much more often than those bleeding leads. Many Richmond region organizations present awards designed to “catch people doing things right,” in the words of the renowned leadership coach and “One Minute Manager” author Ken Blanchard. Thanks to the efforts of Chamber RVA, the Community Foundation for a Greater Richmond, the Office of the Governor, Richmond Region Tourism and so many others, we have ample examples of ordinary people and organizations doing extraordinary work for the good of the community.

Here we are highlighting four honorees who, in keeping with this issue’s theme, make a difference today and strive to shape a better future. They are ambassadors for a city full of changemakers; look for more on each program’s website and in our weekly email newsletter, the Sunday Story. >

ADAM EWING



AIMEE SELLECK

Vision: Universal access to the resources needed to survive and to thrive

With a nearly decade-long career spanning science education, youth programming, trail conservation, behavioral health services and volunteer coordination, Aimee Selleck's professional path has been anything but linear. But now that the Virginia Commonwealth University grad is working for her alma mater — and earning a master's degree there — it feels like her career has come full circle.

Selleck is the student employment manager at VCU, where she helps her fellow Rams access part-time and

seasonal jobs to meet their financial needs and other goals. She also manages a free student resource for career clothing called the Suit Yourself Closet alongside a staff of students. "I get to be surrounded by incredible students, team members and campus partners, so I feel very lucky," Selleck says.

Her efforts haven't gone unnoticed. She was recently recognized as the Young Professional of the Year at Chamber RVA's 2024 Icons Awards, which spotlights young professionals who embody leadership, vision and a passion for progress.

Selleck has been working at VCU since 2021 and started pursuing a master's degree in public administration in 2022. She's also finishing up an EMT program — all in the name of serving her community.

"I'm working toward learning and developing myself so I can better serve," she says. "That's the reason I ventured down the emergency medical services pathway: to be able to better support the community at critical moments of need, like others who have inspired me, especially since those times of need will only continue to grow and evolve."

Canadian by birth, Selleck has spent most of her life in the Richmond region, and she has high hopes for her hometown. "I believe that a vision for Richmond has to be one where every community member — and particularly those who are afforded less systemic, institutional and/or interpersonal power — can access the things they need to survive and to thrive. I'd like to see the city develop in ways that ensure all folks have access to affordable housing, food security, accessible and affirming health care, quality education at all levels, reliable public transportation, supportive and meaningful employment with a living wage, and community spaces that support connections. I envision Richmond as a place where people should come before profit, where we're building together a more just society, where care is the priority."

The Icons Awards

Presented by Chamber RVA, the Icons Awards recognize businesses and young professionals under age 40 who are driving change in the Richmond region. Nominations open in August, and the awards are presented in November. Meet more 2024 winners at chamber RVA.com/icons-awards.

BEZAWIT GETACHEW MULATU

Vision: Effective policies that ensure equitable access to health care for all

As a senior premed and pre-law student at the University of Richmond, Bezawit Getachew Mulatu is driven by a desire to improve the lives of people with visual impairments. It's a calling that began when she was a child in Ethiopia with an uncorrected refractive error — the leading cause of vision impairment in children and adults around the world. As she grew older, Mulatu realized just how many people in her community suffered from preventable vision problems and how significantly it affected their lives.

"Struggling to read, lacking access to basic educational resources and finding it difficult to obtain essential medical information in our local languages — these were not just my personal experiences but reflections of the larger barriers so many around me faced," says Mulatu, who moved to Richmond in 2021 to pursue her degrees.

Although she's still an undergrad, Mulatu already boasts an impressive track record of research and projects focused on promoting inclusivity for people with disabilities, particularly the visually impaired. Her book, "Basic Life Support," which will be published in Ethiopia in multiple languages, is designed to make critical medical information more accessible. Another project, called "Tactile Translations," aims to address the gaps between the legal protections promised to blind patients and the realities they face in health care settings. And most recently, she's been working on a project that's reimagining the UR campus for students with visual impairments.

In addition to her work on campus, Mulatu is gaining on-the-ground

experience as an EMT, volunteering as a clinician in a free clinic and spending time at a local hospital. "These roles have given me a firsthand look at how medicine often fails to address the full scope of what a patient experiences," she says. In November, Mulatu was recognized with a 2024 Governor's Volunteerism & Community Service Award, which spotlights outstanding volunteer efforts.

After graduating later this year, Mulatu plans to attend graduate school in the U.S., then establish a base in Ethiopia while exploring opportunities

around the world. "I hope to work on ways to contribute to systematic changes that improve eye care delivery in developing countries, ensuring that more people have access to the care they need to prevent vision loss," she says. She also plans to pursue a law degree, noting, "These disciplines are not mutually exclusive, and by bridging this gap, I believe we can create more effective policies that ensure equitable access to health care for all, particularly for underserved communities."

Governor's Volunteerism & Community Service Awards

The annual awards program spotlights outstanding volunteer efforts on behalf of Virginians across the commonwealth. Nominations are open from April through June. See more 2024 honorees at servevirginia.org/news-and-events/2024-governors-awards/.



TAMRA GORE

Vision: Encourage people to experience the city

Don't underestimate the power of tequila as a catalyst for great ideas. Just ask Richmond native Tamra Gore, who launched her business, RVA Explore Tour, with a wildly successful margarita tour on Cinco de Mayo in 2023. She and her crew haven't taken a weekend off since.

"RVA, especially at this time, is the perfect place for explorers like me," says Gore, who was recently honored with the Rising Community Impact Award at the 2024 BLK RVA Commu-

nity Awards. "New wineries, food spots, breweries, events, festivals, music scenes, artwork and more are emerging — not to mention all the established history the city already has. I wanted to create a safe, celebratory space where people can come together and enjoy all that the city has to offer."

With outings focused on everything from murals and tacky lights to rooftop bars, RVA Explore Tour offers something for everyone. But the variety isn't the only thing that helps the

group stand out from other tour companies. "We are way more than transportation — we're an experience," Gore says. "Each of our rides are built in with a driver and an enthusiastic host. The host is your personal hype man who takes pictures, hosts personalized games and gives away prizes. Our hosts also DJ, so you don't have to worry about the music."

As a Black business owner, Gore makes it a priority to highlight other Black-owned businesses in town and to celebrate Black history and culture. She partners with several Black businesses (The Riviere, Penny's Wine Shop, Plant Shops, Resolution Winery in Petersburg, Bite by Bite & Co., Autum Restaurant & Lounge, Brookland Park Flowers & Gifts, and the Black History Museum & Cultural Center of Virginia) as a way to support and promote them. RVA Explore's Black history tours, hosted in partnership with local civil rights activist and historian Gary Flowers, are other popular options.

"Our company helps shape the minds of many, showing anyone who rides that RVA is a beautiful place to experience," Gore says. "Oftentimes we host riders from other states and even other countries who know nothing about the city. Even more often we have RVA natives who have never seen some of the places that we frequent on our bus. Regardless of the background, our goal is always to encourage people to experience the city. To explore the city. To appreciate the city. And to be proud of the city."

BLK RVA Community Awards

An initiative of Richmond Region Tourism, the BLK RVA Community Awards showcase the achievements of Black businesses, programs and individuals in promoting Black culture, heritage and tourism. The inaugural awards were presented in August 2024; nominations are expected to open in the spring with public voting in July. Meet more winners at visitblk RVA.com/awards-ty.



LEFT AND OPPOSITE PAGE: ADAM EWING

RYAN CONWAY

Vision: Sharing high-quality teaching strategies to inspire current and future teachers

The best teachers never stop learning, which is why Glen Allen High School's Ryan Conway is heading to Asia to study teaching methods there. The social studies teacher, who also serves as the director of the school's Center for Education and Human Development, recently secured a \$14,900 grant from the Community Foundation for a Greater Richmond to support his project.

After being nominated by a parent and student for an R.E.B. Award for Teaching Excellence, Conway says receiving the news of the grant was emotional. "When they came to give me the award, I was in the middle of teaching," he remembers. "I'm not going to lie, I started tearing up when [Superintendent] Dr. Cashwell was reading the award description. I absolutely love teaching, and it was an honor to be recognized as a good teacher in front of my students. They were cheering, and it was a special moment."

Conway's goal is to travel to Japan, South Korea and Singapore, which all rank in the top six countries for math and reading literacy and are known for their cutting-edge teacher preparatory programs. He plans to visit schools and colleges to observe and learn about their teaching strategies and how they prepare and professionally develop teachers. "I am specifically interested in observing high-quality engagement strategies to bring back to my classroom and also disseminate to current and future teachers," he says.

Conway notes that many schools



in these countries recognize the specific challenges of teaching Generation Alpha (those born starting in 2010), with their unique focus on technology and artificial intelligence. He says he's excited by the opportunity to see how educators in these other countries are dealing with common issues such as the overreliance on technology and social media and the lack of engagement that can result.

"My passion is the art of teaching," Conway says, remarking on his commitment to influencing the future generation of teachers. After 23 years in education, he's noticed a lack of interest in education careers — and that's something he hopes to change

using his newfound knowledge. "My enthusiasm and love for my job help inspire my students to see what a rewarding career teaching can be." ■

R.E.B. Awards for Teaching Excellence

This program of the Community Foundation for a Greater Richmond rewards inspiring classroom performances by public school teachers with cash grants to support professional development activities. Nominations for the 2025 program are open now; recipients will be announced in November. See the other 2024 winners at cfrichmond.org/news/REBAwardsTeachingExcellence.

A Place for Everyone

A LOOK AT RICHMOND'S MANY CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS

BY MELODY YUAN

The Virginia Hispanic Foundation, host of the annual ¿Qué Pasa? Festival, promotes Hispanic businesses and offers community services.



As a state capital, business center and transportation hub, Richmond has long welcomed people from diverse backgrounds. While the city continues to grow – on average gaining 34 new residents per day, according to the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center – residents come together as Richmonders while celebrating the tapestry of cultures they bring with them. From the calm, healing environment of the Elegba Folklore Society to the explosive performances at the Organization of Chinese Americans' annual Lunar New Year Celebration, Richmond offers the opportunity for anyone to make their own thriving community. Meet some of the cultural organizations that make it possible.

VIRGINIA HISPANIC FOUNDATION

The Virginia Hispanic Foundation, founded in 2003, is the nonprofit affiliate of the Virginia Hispanic Chamber. It works alongside the chamber to host more than 150 events to promote growth, visibility and credibility for its members and local Hispanic businesses. Its annual ¿Qué Pasa? Festival, held on Brown's Island each May, features Latin American dance and music, food vendors, and handmade gifts from local artisans. The foundation welcomes volunteers for the festival as well as its job fairs and legislative receptions.

The Virginia Hispanic Foundation also offers mentoring to young Hispanic students, provides bilingual workshops, matches employers to Hispanic jobseekers, and assists in immigration and civil services. Its Pasaporte A La Educación program, which

educates Hispanic students in STEM and leadership skills, has reached over 1,700 families and students since its launch in 2011. The program is intended to decrease the Hispanic dropout rate and prepare students for future careers. vahf.org

ORGANIZATION OF CHINESE AMERICANS (CENTRAL VIRGINIA)

"Our mission is to advance the social, political and economic well-being of Chinese and other Asian Americans," says Jie Liu, president of the Central Virginia chapter of the Organization of Chinese Americans, a national nonprofit. OCA-CVC has been promoting Chinese and Asian culture in the Richmond area since 1978. The organization hosts cultural heritage events, such as the annual Lunar New Year Celebration in January; the Asian American Celebration, a collaboration with the Asian American Society of

LEFT: COURTESY VIRGINIA HISPANIC FOUNDATION; OPPOSITE PAGE: CHARLES WILLIAMS



The Capital City Kwanzaa Festival is one of many outreach efforts by the Elegba Folklore Society.

Central Virginia scheduled for May 17, and an Autumn Festival. Other OCA-CVC programs include year-round lion dance lessons, scholarships and tutoring. Liu says anyone is welcome to participate in the activities and notes, "We have many volunteer opportunities." [oca-cvc.org](#)

ELEGBA FOLKLORE SOCIETY

Thirty-five years ago, there was a call from the community for more African American arts and cultural engagement opportunities. Today, the Elegba Folklore Society continues to promote the values it was founded upon

through its annual festivals and cultural center. "We intend to re-instill a cultural foundation in the African American community and build bridges to the broader community," says Janine Bell, the society's president and artistic director.

Elegba's cultural center at 101 E. Broad St. showcases artifacts imported from Africa and the African diaspora, including textiles, home decor, books and clothing. The public is welcome to visit the center to look around, host a study group and even just enjoy a moment of rest. "When people come in, they tell us they expe-

rience an immediate warmth," Bell says.

Among Elegba's outreach events are Juneteenth, A Freedom Celebration; the Down Home Family Reunion in Jackson Ward every August; the Capital City Kwanzaa Festival each December; and regular cultural and historical tours of Richmond. Also, the cultural center is open during RVA First Fridays. [efsinc.org](#)

INDIA ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA

The nonprofit India Association of Virginia, established in 1961, caters to the individual and professional development of the Indian community in the Richmond metropolitan area. IAVA brings together thousands of Richmond families and community members through sporting, educational and cultural events, including its signature India Mela event, a celebration of Indian culture, cuisine, music and dance; India Republic Day; Kavi Sammelan, or Laughter Night; and a Mother's Day celebration. IAVA also offers a 10K training program, camping, and pickleball, tennis, and cricket tournaments. [iava.us](#) ■

CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

Further heritage-based organizations

Afghan Association of Central Virginia

AACVA provides a warm and welcoming environment, cultural events and social programs for immigrants from Afghanistan. [aacva.us](#)

Ancient Order of Hibernians

A fraternal organization founded in New York City in 1836 and locally in 1979, the Hibernians explore Irish heritage and promote the culture. [aohrichmond.org](#)

Asian American Society of Central Virginia

Since 1998, the AASCV has celebrated Asian heritage, supported education and health initiatives, promoted civic engagement, and advocated for equality while preserving cultural traditions and encouraging collaboration. The group also hosts the annual Asian American Celebration. [aascv.org](#)

Filipino American Association of Central Virginia

Founded in 1972, the nonprofit FAACV supports Filipino culture, organizes cultural events and promotes volunteer works. [facebook.com/faacv](#)

Greater Richmond Bengali Association

The GRBA organizes activities and events for families of Bengali heritage and promotes the culture. [mygrba.org](#)

Italian-American Cultural Association of Virginia

A nonprofit organization for those of any nationality who appreciate Italian culture, the IACAV hosts social events, presents scholarships and shares the positive

influences of Italian American culture. [iacava.org](#)

The Japan-Virginia Society

Founded in 1988 with the sponsoring leadership of then-Gov. Gerald L. Baliles and Japanese Ambassador Nobuo Matsunaga, JVS promotes international cooperation, understanding, and trade and investment. It also hosts cultural and social events. [japan-virginia.org](#)

Richmond Vietnamese Association

Since 2005, the association has served the Vietnamese community and promoted the culture and traditions through activities and events. [richmondvietnameseassociation.org](#) ■



The James River has won international recognition for our community's efforts to eliminate pollution.

Richmond's Wild Heart

ONCE ONE OF THE MOST POLLUTED RIVERS IN THE COUNTRY, THE JAMES RIVER NOW THRIVES AS A RECREATIONAL ESCAPE AND VITAL NATURAL RESOURCE FOR RICHMOND. BUT IS ITS FUTURE SECURE?

BY JENNA LAPP

Flowing through downtown Richmond, the James River is a recreational haven that welcomes as many as 2 million visitors each year, according to Friends of the James River Park. Offering hiking, climbing, fishing, boating and birdwatching, the 600-acre park system dotting the river's banks provides a scenic escape from the bustling city. But beneath the surface lies a complicated question: Is it safe to swim?

SAFETY FIRST

"Yes, most of the time," says Tom Dunlap, who serves as the James River-keeper for the James River Association, the largest nonprofit river conservation group in Richmond.

Swimming — or even just wading — certainly has not always been safe. From 1966 to 1975, Allied Chemical and a contractor, Life Science Products, manufactured an insecticide called Kepone in Hopewell, disposing of waste in the river. In 1975, the negative effects of Kepone exposure on humans were documented, as was the extent of the chemical pollution in the river, which immediately shuttered both the factory and commercial fishing on the James — and, in 1976, inspired the founding of the James River Association.

The fishing ban was partially lifted

in 1980 and finally expired in 1988, but the river was considered one of the country's worst-polluted waterways for another decade. From 2000 onward, however, local and governmental efforts have nursed the James back to health.

RIVER RENAISSANCE

"We've seen a tremendous amount of investment from the state in trying to reach water quality goals. That has really allowed the James to rebound from being one of the more polluted rivers in the entire country to now one that not only do people want to swim in, but people want to engage with it in all sorts of ways," Dunlap says.

Healthy river systems are critical for biodiversity, and as the James River and its environs have recovered, so have its inhabitants. In the past decade, Atlantic sturgeon, once thought gone from the river, have reappeared, and bald eagles have come back so strongly that some are leaving the watershed to get away from their competitors. It may not seem as though a species or two makes a difference, but biodiversity is essential to the survival of all species — including humans, who also rely on the landscapes like the James River watershed to act as a natural floodplain and carbon sink, protecting the city from the effects >

*"Everything we do is connected to **rivers** and **waterways** in some way, shape or form ... it's connected to **fresh water**."*

ADAM SCHELLHAMMER,
AMERICAN RIVERS
REGIONAL DIRECTOR

of changing weather patterns due to global warming.

"Everything we do is connected to rivers and waterways in some way, shape or form, regardless of your background, your geographic location, your career pathways, aspirations — it's connected to fresh water," says Adam Schellhammer, the mid-Atlantic regional director of American Rivers, a nonprofit environmental advocacy organization focused on protecting and promoting the health of rivers in the United States.

Another river health advocacy organization, International River Foundation, awarded the Thiess International Riverprize to the James in 2019 for its transformation from one of the most polluted rivers in the world to one of the most improved.

RESILIENCE

But with all the success, the James River remains vulnerable to modern threats. Pollution from urban runoff, sewer overflows and industrial waste still pose significant challenges, testing the limits of the river's resilience. After heavy rains, stormwater overwhelms Richmond's aging sewer system, causing untreated wastewater to spill into the James. This spikes bacterial levels, making swimming dangerous for days. The city of Richmond has a plan to fix



the combined sewer system by 2035 to end the overflow events.

In the meantime, Dunlap, the Riverkeeper, says waiting 48 to 72 hours after a rain event is generally sufficient time to allow the water to return to its baseline. Swimmers who want a more precise measure can refer to the James River Association's James River Watch Program.

"Every week during the prime recreational season, so that's from Memorial Day to Labor Day, we sample the river on Thursday afternoons," Dunlap explains. Volunteers test multiple parameters, including water temperature, cloudiness and E. coli content. In the 2024 season, 81% of tests showed that the water was safe for swimming. "After 24 hours, we report our data on Fridays so that, every weekend, before people go to do their weekend activity in the water, they can

know if it's safe." JRA publishes the data at jamesriverwatch.org.

FRIENDS

At Pony Pasture, on the south riverbank near Bon Air, a sign asks visitors to, "Be a friend, support the James River Park." It was placed there by Friends of the James River Park, a nonprofit, citizen-led organization that supports the park system. Clean water is not the only must-have for a dip in the river on a hot summer day — there also needs to be public land, a parking lot and a cleared trail to the riverbank. That's where the Friends step in. They also publish river safety information at jamesriverpark.org and place signs at entry points indicating whether it is safe to enter.

Ralph White, the manager of the James River Park System from 1980 to 2012, and an army of volunteers trans-



Left: The James River attracts as many as 2 million hikers, bikers and swimmers each year. Right: The return of Atlantic sturgeon is a sign of the river's recovery.



formed a series of riverfront park parcels from an overgrown, trash-strewn wasteland to the neat network of recreation sites and urban wilderness Richmonders enjoy today. The Friends, founded in 1999, promote and advocate for the park, help with volunteer efforts, offer enrichment and education for visitors and, crucially, raise funds for maintenance projects.

Originally a grassroots volunteer group, the Friends became a professional organization after City Council adopted the James River Park System Master Plan in 2020. The following year the nonprofit hired Josh Stutz, its first executive director and an experienced nonprofit manager, to implement the plan. "I care a lot about this infrastructure and this environment and want to see it thrive," Stutz says.

He works closely with Giles Garri-

son, the current park superintendent, to implement projects the city does not have the budget for. "The problems of the park are problems we can solve. The only real issue is money," Stutz says.

He explains that the city of Richmond owns and partially funds the park system, but it gives the Friends permission to use private money to do work on public land. The Friends buy equipment for the park system, replace infrastructure such as boat ramps, spread river safety awareness, and provide ongoing support for the protection and enhancement of the park.

RECREATIONAL HUB

The combination of money, volunteers and countless hours out in the park helped transform the James River Park System into a recreational hub with an economic influence. As many as 2 million visitors come from all over the country to play in the water and enjoy the park system each year, according to the Friends. In 2023, visitors to Belle Isle alone spent \$2.1 million, according to a report by Longwood University's College of Economics.

Visitors can climb a rock wall or old railroad trestles, watch birds from the walkway created along a stormwater pipeline, and hike or bike waterfront

paths. Getting into the water itself unlocks another level of outdoor recreation. When the conditions are right, the river is rife with swimmers, tubes, kayaks and paddleboards.

Alice Broderick, the associate director of digital for American Rivers, enjoys kayaking the river's class IV rapids. She has seen both the activism and water sports sides of the James River community.

"Whitewater kayaking is one of the most terrifying but most gratifying things that I've ever done," Broderick says, adding that time spent on or near the river serves as a mental health boost. During the peak season, she says, she's out in the rapids three to four times per week.

Whether whitewater kayaking or hiking on the surrounding trails, Broderick enjoys connecting with a diverse range of people who share her interest in the James.

"It's a place where people can come together," Broderick says, "and really care about something and see the importance of it."

In coming together, Richmonders not only protect a vital resource but also preserve a piece of their identity. The James River is more than water, it's a reflection of the city itself: resilient, vibrant and full of life. ■

Read the Room

A TRADITIONAL CITY
AMENITY, **LIBRARIES**
ARE ALSO GATEWAYS
TO THE FUTURE

BY RACHEL KESTER

Public libraries have undergone a remarkable transformation over their existence," says Dennis T. Clark, the librarian of Virginia. "Once regarded primarily as repositories of books for well-heeled Virginians, they have become vibrant hubs for community engagement and innovation for everyone."

Virginia currently has 372 public libraries, around 40 of which are in the Richmond area. While they still serve their original purpose of lending books, over the past few decades public libraries have also become important social spaces where people can learn how to apply for jobs, listen to lectures and access technology. They are an extraordinary example of how a centuries-old concept remains relevant thanks to continual adaptation. >

COURTESY CHESTERFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY





The LibraryBots are a team of local high schoolers who meet at Chesterfield's Central Library for robotics competitions.



A Glowforge
laser cutter
at the
Chesterfield
Central
Library

MAKING SPACE

After a two-year renovation, Chesterfield County's Central Library on Lucy Corr Boulevard reopened in 2018 with a plethora of new features, including a pioneering makerspace. "The makerspace at Central Library was initially created as a space to promote technical hands-on learning in support of a local Virginia FIRST robotics team, known today as the LibraryBots," says Michael R. Mabe, director of library services at Chesterfield Public Library. "The parents of these team members, their mentors and library staff have collectively expanded the tools and resources available in the Central Library makerspace to support the creation of their competitive robot."

The makerspace now includes a Silhouette Cameo cutting machine, sewing machines, various mechanical and electrical tools, 3D printers, and a Glowforge 3D laser cutter. "The Glowforge at Central Library has

been very popular, especially as residents are seeking ways to create unique gifts for family and friends," Mabe says. "The 3D printers are popular around the system and are used to make anything from fun figures to replacement parts for home items that no longer have replacement pieces available for purchase."

The appeal of Central Library's makerspace has inspired many of Chesterfield's other branches to offer similar spots and include their own distinct touches. For example, the Ettrick-Matoaca Library on River Road near Petersburg houses a multimedia studio equipped with photography, video and podcasting equipment. "These tools are available to any user interested in learning and creating physical objects for art, mechanical or science purposes," Mabe says. Someone is on hand to help when the library is open, and appointments can be made for one-on-one assistance. Going to the library

has become a creative approach for locals who want to learn new skills or access costly equipment without having to make significant investments.

PRINT, PLUS ...

Area libraries offer numerous other nonbook amenities. Richmond Public Library on East Franklin Street hosts the Gellman Concert Series one Saturday a month throughout the year. Created in 1973, the free concerts are open to the public and immerse listeners in everything from jazz to Irish folk music. RPL is also home to the Memory Lab, a space dedicated to helping residents preserve family memories by recording oral stories, digitizing old photos and VHS tapes, or learning how to investigate historical records. Additionally, the library has craft classes, chess instruction, exercise classes, college prep workshops, blood pressure screenings, an Innovation Lab stocked with tech tools and software, and more.

Offerings from the Henrico County Public Library system include digital media labs with tech equipment such as green screens and 3D printers; classes to brush up on computer skills, business plans, budgeting, and editing photos on a smartphone; movie screenings; and curated kits for children and families to learn topics including birding and plant identification.

In Hanover, the recently completed Montpelier Recreation Center and Library on Clazemont Road is among the first of its kind in the area. The space combines a traditional library with a gym that hosts fitness classes and various sports, including basketball and pickleball. The facility also offers a stage and classrooms, and a new baseball and softball field is expected to open early this year.

And, of course, all of the libraries still loan books, movies, and audio and video recordings; have access to research databases; provide meeting spaces; compile up-to-date lists of tutoring, tax, and job-search resources; host book clubs and story times; and can recommend reads for any age, interest, or reading level.

AN EXPANDING COLLECTION

Richmond's public library scene began blooming during the 1840s, according to a history compiled by RPL. A two-room space in the Athenæum building at 11th and Marshall streets, filled mainly with history books, was the city's first public library.

In the early 1900s, the industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie made two attempts to help Richmond build a main public library, but the city ultimately declined the funds, in part because they were contingent on the library being desegregated.

The Richmond Public Library Association was founded around the same time, in 1905, but the first city-funded public library didn't open until

1924. It incorporated several smaller libraries, including the Rosemary library — founded in 1890 by the lawyer and writer Thomas Nelson Page and later a fee-based public library and then the library of John Marshall High School — and the

Arents Free Library, which had grown from the St. Andrew's Library founded in 1902 by Grace Arents, the niece of businessman Lewis Ginter. RPL calls the Arents Library "the first free public library in the City of Richmond during the 20th century." >



"The future of libraries is critical to the well-being of communities and the accessibility of knowledge. Libraries serve as equalizers, providing free access to education and information for all, regardless of status."

DENNIS T. CLARK,
LIBRARIAN
OF VIRGINIA

The Rosa Dixon Bowser Library, opened in 1925 and situated in two rooms above the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, was RPL's first branch. It served Black residents, who were denied access to the main library until it was desegregated in 1947. Named for Richmond's first Black schoolteacher, the Bowser Library was later moved to Clay Street and became one of the city's top circulating libraries with almost 12,000 volumes, the most of any of the city's public library branches at the time, according to a 1944 Richmond Times-Dispatch article.

RPL arguably began modernizing in 1962 with the purchase of its first bookmobile, nicknamed "Nellie Belle" and seen as a critical tool for expanding local literary access. A 1965 Times-Dispatch article reported that RPL, with help from Friends of the Richmond Public Library, began providing coin-operated copying machines, scholarships for library science majors and even strollers for parents to use while browsing aisles with their children.

During the 1970s, Richmond's public libraries became community centers that hosted local art exhibits, educational classes and children's movies and expanded their lending selections to include vinyl records and expansive newspaper collections, according to a 1975 RTD article by Alison Griffin. By the 2000s, local libraries had added computer labs, electronic books and other digital resources.

THE PRICE OF KNOWLEDGE

As they strive to adjust to society's changing needs, public libraries face challenges. "Many libraries struggle to maintain their services due to budget limitations," the Library of Virginia's Clark says. "Although the General Assembly is fully funding its portion of Virginia's public libraries budgets, counties sometimes see libraries as an opportunity to trim

tight budgets."

Libraries have attempted to balance their budgets by cutting staff, reducing hours and charging fees for non-county residents to use their services. "Friends" groups help support libraries through fundraisers such as book sales and golf tournaments.

And while many public libraries have been revamped, some are still awaiting their turn for restoration. "Many of the library buildings around Virginia are getting to the end of their life, and they were designed for a much different world," Clark says. "So, adapting space and planning renovations and new buildings is always a pressure."

Library updates can be expensive — the new Midlothian Library at 100 Millworks Crossing cost almost \$18

million to construct — but the upgraded buildings return with more than just modern necessities. Eco-friendliness is now a focus, with many incorporating sustainable building materials, rain gardens and solar panels. Henrico's Libbie Mill Library has a rooftop solar system and native plant landscaping to promote biodiversity and assist with stormwater management.

Some are also expanding their reach. Midlothian Library features an outdoor music garden for kids and a pathway connecting it to nearby J.B. Watkins Elementary School. Outdoor book lockers, like those at Chesterfield's Central Library, allow customers to pick up reserved materials at a time convenient for them, even if the library is closed.

Richmond Public Library's Memory Lab helps residents preserve their family's heritage.



THIS PAGE, AND OPPOSITE PAGE: COURTESY RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY



The Chamber Music Society of Central Virginia performs at the Richmond Public Library.

SERVING EVOLVING NEEDS

As the public library system has evolved, so has the librarian's role. Their work has grown from directing people to books and leading story times to assisting with education, career searches and, especially, technology. "Libraries play a crucial role in helping patrons navigate the vast and often contradictory information available online, a challenge that continues to grow in complexity with social media and AI," Clark says.

In response, the Chesterfield library system is expanding its Your Personal Librarian service. YPL allows customers to schedule individual time with a librarian to learn how to do everything from formatting a resume

to using online databases.

Access to technology has become one of the most important amenities of modern libraries, especially in rural or underserved areas. Several now supply mobile hotspots for checkout that residents can use at their homes if the internet is unavailable or unaffordable, ensuring people have access to resources that can help them thrive.

"It's easy to forget that not everyone has unlimited access to technology, Wi-Fi, home libraries or personal networks," says Mabe of Chesterfield Public Library. "Public libraries can help fill those gaps."

The commonwealth's public libraries saw around 21 million visits and

more than 40 million items checked out in 2023 — evidence that the institutions continue to play a major role in communities. Countless more attended meetups and tutoring sessions, accessed Wi-Fi, applied for Social Security, got help with taxes or resumes, researched their genealogy, and experimented with tech tools.

"The future of libraries is critical to the well-being of communities and the accessibility of knowledge," Clark says. "Libraries serve as equalizers, providing free access to education and information for all, regardless of status. They are safe and welcoming spaces where diverse groups can connect, fostering inclusion and a sense of belonging." ■



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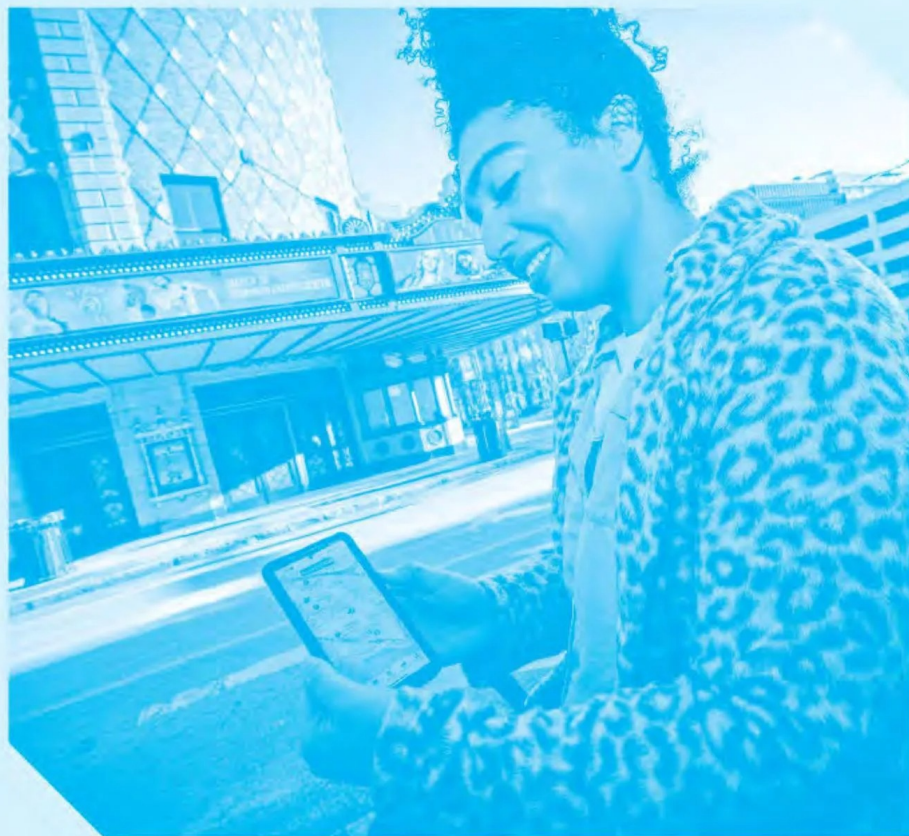
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DIVERSIONS

Outside the Walls

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC SITES SET THE GROUNDWORK FOR FUTURE EXPANSION

BY HARRY KOLLATZ JR.

Richmond's cultural landscape is evolving. Coming to the city in the near future is a fine arts museum along Arthur Ashe Boulevard bursting to grow and providing a prominent stage for ballet. The displaced home of a Revolutionary War-era Black man is receiving a historic Jackson Ward homecoming interpreting his legacy within the split-in-two community in which he resided in an unprecedented way. And a vast space along Main Street is soon to become a significant portal through which visitors can gain a larger picture of Richmond's role in the domestic slave trade and the effect of the "peculiar institution," not only here, but throughout the world.

Prepare for experience.

EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION

After four previous expansions, in fall 2024 the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts announced its largest development to date: the 173,000-square-foot McGlothlin Wing II. Originally scheduled for a late 2025 groundbreaking and a 2028 completion, those plans may alter due to constructional concerns raised by the commonwealth's Art and Architectural Review Board. With the consideration of 3,500 surveyed patrons taken into account and \$261 million approved by the General Assembly for the state-sup-

ported institution, the SmithGroup was enlisted to design the south-and-west facing addition. The momentum slowed in December 2024 due to a 3-1 negative vote (with two abstentions) by the AARB.

Concerns raised by the board included size and the visual impact it may have for the corner of Grove Avenue and Arthur Ashe Boulevard. The design incorporates a vertically striated surface "that plays with natural light, changing throughout the day and across time," SmithGroup's lead designer Dayton Schroeter said in a press release. "It recalls the past while reflecting our present and anticipating our future."

The challenges faced include limiting expansion into the E. Claiborne and Lora Robins Sculpture Garden and a water table that restricts underground depth. The VMFA, sent back to the drawing board, as of press time needs to meet again with the AARB. The final green light depends on the decision of the director of Virginia's Department of General Services.

The museum's director and CEO Alex Nyerges, quoted in Richmond BizSense, stated, "We're going to build the building. We'll do what we have to do and we'll keep moving."

The project is, in fact, already in motion, involving the renewal of 45,000 square feet of existing space to allow for important additional exhibitions of photography, works on paper and conservation.

The VMFA's Leslie Cheek Theater is nearing completion of renovations made possible by \$5.3 million in private funds for use by the Richmond Ballet as its main stage.

These elements are well on their way and the ballet is slated to open at the Cheek in March.

Nyerges in a written statement described this renewal as the Cheek's first major upfit in 70 years. The work aims to enhance the flexibility of events that can be held there while improving the theater experience for audiences and performers.

The proposed expansion will double the VMFA's size and provide more gallery space for the museum's permanent collection, including African and contemporary American art. Plans for the McGlothlin Wing II also include a special events space to seat 500 people, meeting rooms, a cafe and a bar. Nyerges added in the statement, "A second special exhibition gallery suite of 12,000 square feet will mean the museum will always have a special exhibition on view."

SMALL HOUSE, BIG STORY

Through its "Skipwith-Roper Homecoming" program, The JXN Project is interpreting the legacy of Abraham Peyton Skipwith who, after building his house in 1793, became Jackson Ward's first known Black homeowner. Alongside this effort, the Library of Virginia on July 15, 2025, will publicly open an exhibition titled, "Abraham Peyton Skipwith: From House to Highway," detailing the Skipwith legacy and the rupture caused in Jackson Ward by the 1950s construction of the tolled "Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike" section of Interstate 95.

The LVA, backed by a \$282,975 grant from the National Endowment



for the Humanities and in partnership with The JXN Project, is curating the exhibit. A traveling version will visit public libraries, small museums, community centers and other sites throughout Virginia. Further, through Virginia Public Media, a documentary about the “Homecoming” project is being directed by award-winning filmmaker Stacey L. Holman.

The “House to Highway” exhibition forms an unprecedented examination of Jackson Ward using a timeline of more than 250 years (1767-2026), as told through a combination of records, maps and photographs from the LVA’s collection.

“Of great significance is [Skipwith’s] 1785 petition for freedom,” explains Sarah Falls, the library’s

director of public services and outreach. “Further records will tell the story of Skipwith, his descendants, the history of the house, and of the Jackson Ward district. In particular, our significant holdings of the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike Authority Records from 1955 to 1958 tell the story of the highway, the splitting of the neighborhood and the removal of the Skipwith-Roper house.”

The exhibition appropriately fits into the 250th anniversary of the drafting of the Declaration of Independence.

Skipwith, while enslaved in Williamsburg, is first recorded in 1767. He filed a 1785 legislative petition for his freedom but ultimately purchased freedom for himself around 1789 and later manumitted his wife

A rendering by architect Burt Pinnock depicts the reconstructed Skipwith-Roper house (right), part of The JXN Project’s Jackson Ward education and interpretive center.

and family members.

In 1793, Skipwith purchased parcels of land on the northern edge of Richmond. He was one of the first known Black Richmonders with a fully executed bequest, and his 1799 will conveyed the cottage and his possessions — including a gun, gold brooch, silver watch, livestock, and horse and buggy — to his descendants, as he put it, “to them and their heirs forever.”

Maria, a Skipwith granddaughter, married Peter Roper, and the family retained ownership until 1905. Renowned architectural historian Maria Wingfield Scott noted in her classic, “Houses of Old Richmond,” that the descendants of Skipwith maintained “a longer tenure in one family than almost any in the >

history of Richmond.”

The cottage was among the residences that through 1871 gerrymandering ultimately became Jackson Ward. The boundaries were drawn to deliberately suppress the Black vote. Enforced segregation created a close-knit community and birthed important civic and commercial enterprises.

Then came the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike.

Two separate public referendums failed to stave off its slicing through Jackson Ward. This section of I-95, tolled at the time, swept off schools and businesses and displaced 1,000 families.

The assumption, until recently, was that the highway’s trench took away that piece of Duval Street and the Skipwith-Roper house with it.

Enter The JXN Project, founded by Sessa Joi Moon, who was appointed the Chief Diversity Officer within the U.S. House of Representatives for the 117th and 118th Congresses, and her sister Enjoli Moon, founder and creative director of the Afrikana Independent Film Festival.

The research undertaken by The JXN Project, in cooperation with the Richmond Times-Dispatch’s Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Michael

Paul Williams, led to the discovery that the Skipwith-Roper cottage was uprooted and moved for \$25 to the Sabot Hill estate in Goochland County.

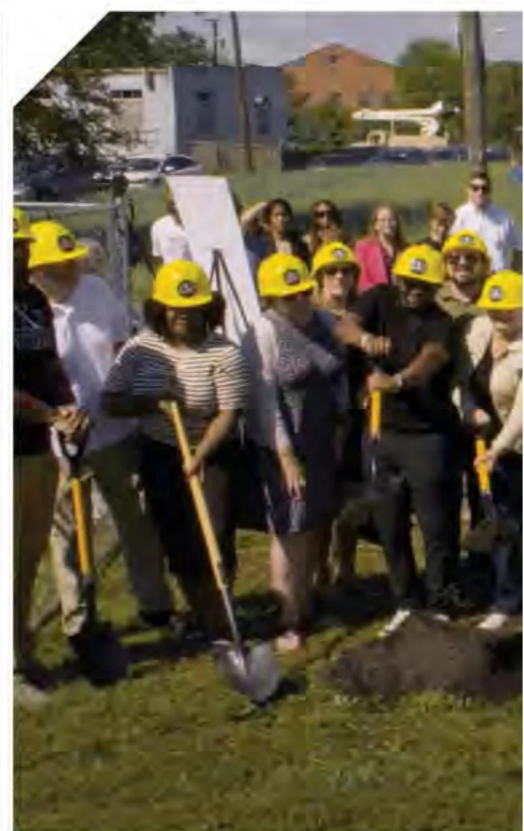
A 1959 Richmond Times-Dispatch article about the cottage recounted, “The house was photographed, carefully inventoried, moved, rebuilt and painted pink. It now stands on a rise of ground to the right of Sabot, with a street sign saying ‘Duval Street,’ pointing the way.”

Successive families remodeled the cottage into a weekend playhouse. Sessa Joi Moon says that a Department of Historic Resources inspection determined that only the stairs remained of the original structure.

The JXN Project and Moon determined then to honor the Skipwith-Roper legacy and reconstruct the cottage at 303 E. Bates St. as the centerpiece of a Jackson Ward education and interpretive center. The JXN Project received a gift of approximately 0.275 acres of land from the Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority and Maggie Walker Community Land Trust.

The total cost for the project is \$5.68 million and comes from a variety of public and private sources. Architect Burt Pinnock, the designer

Right: In September 2024, The JXN Project, joined by city officials, broke ground on the Skipwith-Roper house and education center. Bottom left: The original Skipwith-Roper house in the neighborhood that would become Jackson Ward



of “Hearth: Memorial to the Enslaved” at the College of William & Mary, is partnering with the Richmond Habitat for Humanity and Team Henry Enterprises in the phased construction.

The reconstructed Skipwith-Roper cottage is anticipated to open during Jackson Ward’s anniversary week in April 2026.

For more information, visit thejxnproject.org.

A CHANGE AT THE STATION

“You can walk it,” Marland Buckner, president and CEO of the nonprofit Shockoe Institute, says of Richmond. “I frequently visit New York and Philadelphia, and unlike those two cities, in Richmond it’s all there: the Capitol, Tredegar, St. John’s Church, the African Burial Grounds, all practically within sight of each other. In that respect, there’s no place else in the



COURTESY THE JXN PROJECT



*"This isn't about white history and not Black history but a shared history, a **Richmond history.**"*

MARLAND BUCKNER,
CEO OF SHOCKOE INSTITUTE

country like Richmond. It is the best place to tell this story."

Shockoe Institute's mission is to educate and amplify public understanding of the American slave trade and its lasting effect on today's society. With that goal in mind, the organization is planning to open its first phase at Main Street Station toward the end of 2025, serving as a place to exchange ideas in the same building that functions as a hub. The landmark Beaux Arts structure stands in the middle of what was the center of the domestic slave trade.

With an \$11 million grant from the Mellon Foundation, the institute secured for 10 years 12,300 square feet on the north end of Main Street Station's first floor. "This isn't a pop-up," Buckner notes. Nor is it a museum. The institute isn't collecting, but presenting and invoking. What will be done there, Buckner believes, will be

transformative for understanding Richmond's central role in one of the most fraught aspects of the nation's history, one that spans from the first collision of European and native cultures to the systemic operations of slavery. The institute will tell the history of not only how the domestic slave trade became a primary industry in the city, but its connection to the Northeast and worldwide consequences.

"Visitors are going to learn about the complex financial system that attended these developments, the ways in which Black people worked to resist these developments, and the ways in which all of this constitutes our shared history," Buckner says. "It's essential to our mission that people understand this isn't about white history and not Black history but a shared history, a Richmond history, an American history — it's all of ours."

To develop the experience, the institute engaged Local Projects, the world-class exhibition design firm that created New York City's 9/11 Memorial and Greenwood Rising, commemorating the 1921 Tulsa, Oklahoma, race massacre. Plans for the Main Street Station center include not only text and picture materials, but also a mashup of book talks, music, and dramatic performances and presentations within the exhibition's environment. During normal hours, the institute will be open to the public.

Buckner concedes that, given the subject matter, it may sound odd, but he wants to plant the flag of moral optimism. The institute makes the public commitment to intellectual rigor and discipline.

"We can use the historical record to demonstrate where accountability lies," Buckner says, "but we can do those things and also be generous in our welcome and open in our invitation. We must maintain the optimism that if we do the first thing right, we can keep people here long enough to help more folks turn a corner in their understanding."

For more information, visit theshockoeproject.com. ■

SITES TO SEE

Museums, monuments and heritage sites

MUSEUMS & ATTRACTIONS

The Ashland Museum

The history of Ashland is presented through exhibits, artifacts, photos and community events. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday; 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday; or by appointment. 105 Hanover Ave. 804-368-7314 or ashlandmuseum.org

Beth Ahabah Museum & Archives

Richmond's museum of Jewish history and culture. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday-Thursday, closed Fridays and Saturdays. 1109 W. Franklin St. 804-353-2668 or bethahabah.org/bama

The Chesterfield County Museum and 1892 Jail

Exhibits at this replica of the county's 1749 courthouse trace area history. See website for hours and dates of operation. 6813 Mimms Loop. 804-768-7311 or chesterfieldhistory.com

Executive Mansion

The oldest continuously occupied governor's residence in the country (since 1813). Visit the website for updated hours. 804-371-2642 or executivemansion.virginia.gov

Hanover Museum of History & Culture

Learn about the county, over 300 years old, through engaging and thought-provoking exhibitions. Hours vary, visit the website for updates. 7496 County Complex Road. 804-365-3250 or hanovercounty.gov

Henricus Historical Park

At the second successful English settlement in the New World, learn Colonial history and explore the culture of the Powhatan Indians in the Arrohatock Village. Self-guided tours. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday (last ticket sold at 4 p.m.). 251 Henricus Park Road, Chester. 804-748-1611 or henricus.org

Hollywood Cemetery

Established in 1847, it's the final resting place of two U.S. presidents. Guided tours through RVA on Wheels (vaonwheels.com). 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (8 a.m. to 6 p.m. during daylight saving time). 412 S. Cherry St. 804-648-8501 or hollywoodcemetery.org

The Library of Virginia

Explore the story of Virginia as told through 126 million books, documents, photographs, maps, works of art, newspapers, recordings, films and official records. Exhibitions open to the public, see website for hours and dates of operation. 800 E. Broad St. 804-692-3500 or va.virginia.gov

Mid-Lothian Mines Park

One of the first major industrial sites in the United States is now a 62-acre preserve. Sunrise-sunset daily. 13301 N. Woolridge Road, Midlothian. 804-751-4946 or midlomines.org

Museum of Virginia Catholic History

Exhibits include diaries, journals, photographs and artifacts that tell the history of the Roman Catholic Church in Virginia. Guided tours offered by appointment only. Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, 18 N. Laurel St. 804-359-5661 or richmonddiocese.org

The Poe Museum

Collection of manuscripts, first editions and artifacts belonging to Edgar Allan Poe. 1914 E. Main St. 804-648-5523 or poemuseum.org

The Valentine

Established in 1892, the Valentine helps visitors experience Richmond's diverse stories through tours, events, collections and exhibitions. The museum is now home to one of three Richmond Region Tourism Visitor Centers. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday. 1015 E. Clay St. 804-649-0711 or thevalentine.org

The Valentine First Freedom Center

Located on the corner where the General Assembly met in secret during the American Revolution, the center celebrates Thomas Jefferson's Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. 14 S. 14th St. 804-649-0711 or thevalentine.org

Virginia Holocaust Museum

Learn about the lives of Holocaust survivors through a new exhibit featuring an innovative tool of AI technology that enables museum visitors to engage in conversations with pre-recorded video images of Holocaust survivors and other witnesses to genocide. 2000 E. Cary St. 804-257-5400 or vaholocaust.org



The Enchanted Garden at The Poe Museum

Virginia Museum of History & Culture

Connects visitors to America's past through the story of Virginia. After a \$30 million renovation in 2022, the museum offers additional galleries, a refurbished research library and more. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 428 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd. 804-340-1800 or virginiahistory.org

Virginia State Capitol

Home to the oldest elected lawmaking body in the Western Hemisphere. Free guided tours of the building's rotunda, as well as the old House and Senate chambers. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Saturday; 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. Entrance on Bank Street near 10th Street. 804-698-1788 or virginiacapitol.gov

Virginia War Memorial

The Memorial's Shrine of Memory honors the service and sacrifice of the state's fallen heroes and all veterans. The Galanti Education Center features military history exhibits and award-winning films. Galanti Center: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Saturday; noon to 4 p.m. Sunday. Shrine: See website for updated hours. 621 S. Belvidere St. 804-786-2060 or vawarmemorial.org

Wolf Creek Cherokee Museum & Tribal Center

Learn about the past and present of Cherokee culture through exhibitions and artifacts. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays. Weekday group tours upon request. 7400 Osborne Tumpike. 804-226-1002 or wolfcreekcherokee.com

HISTORIC CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS SITES

Hebrew Cemetery

One of the oldest Jewish cemeteries in the South. Shockoe Hill at Fourth and Hospital streets. Closed Saturdays. 804-358-6757 or bethahabah.org

Historic Polegreen Church

One of the first meeting houses established during the Great Awakening and the site of the first licensed non-Anglican preacher in Virginia, the Rev. Samuel Davies. What stands today is an interpretive design of the original 1747 church. 6411 Heatherwood Drive, Mechanicsville. 804-730-3837 or historicpolegreenchurch.org

Monumental Church

Robert Mills designed this circa 1812 church. Tours by appointment. 1224 E. Broad St. 804-643-7407 or historicrichmond.com

Pro-Cathedral of Saint Peter

Founded in 1834, the first Catholic Church to open in Richmond and the second oldest in the area. It's an example of neoclassic architectural style. 800 E. Grace St. 804-643-4315 or stpeterchurch1834.org

St. John's Church

The site of Patrick Henry's "Give me liberty or give me death" speech, the Episcopal church still holds services today. See website for information on guided tours and reenactments. 2401 E. Broad St. 804-648-5015 or historicstjohnschurch.org

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

The three-centuries-old Episcopal



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church where first lady Martha Washington worshipped. Tours by appointment. 8400 St. Peters Lane, New Kent. 804-932-4846 or stpetersnewkent.org

CIVIL WAR SITES

American Civil War Museum

The museum is housed in a 28,500-square-foot building presenting its renowned collections of artifacts that tell the stories of the Civil War and its legacies from multiple perspectives. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. 480 Tredegar St. 804-649-1861 or acwm.org

Chimborazo Medical Museum

Site of the largest military hospital in the world from 1861 to 1865. 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday. 3215 E. Broad St. 804-226-1981 or nps.gov/rich

Cold Harbor Battlefield Visitor Center

An electronic battle-map program describes the 1862 battle of Gaines' Mill and the 1864 battle of Cold Harbor. 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday (see website for off-season hours). 5515 Anderson-Wright Drive. 804-730-5025 or nps.gov/rich

Confederate War Memorial Chapel

This interdenominational chapel was built in 1887 by Confederate veterans as a memorial to dead Confederate soldiers. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily (weather permitting). 2900 Grove Ave. 804-340-1170

Dabbs House Museum

This home served as a strategic location and the June 1862 military headquarters for Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee. Open by appointment. 3812 Nine Mile Road. 804-652-3406 or henrico.us

Drewry's Bluff

A trail leads visitors to a well-preserved Confederate fort. Sunrise-sunset daily. 7600 Fort Darling Road. 804-226-1981 or nps.gov/rich

Fort Harrison Visitor Center

A self-guided walking trail takes visitors through the fort, which was captured by 3,000 Union soldiers on Sept. 29, 1864. Trail open sunrise-sunset daily; visit website for updated visitor center hours. 8621 Battlefield Park Road. 804-226-1981 or nps.gov/rich

Gaines' Mill Battlefield

Artillery exhibits, the historic Watt House and a 1.5-mile walking trail. Sunrise-sunset daily. 6283 Watt House Road. 804-226-1981 or nps.gov/rich

Glendale National Cemetery/ Malvern Hill Battlefield

The cemetery holds approximately 1,200 graves, many of them Union

soldiers. A nearly 2-mile walking trail traverses battlefields. Sunrise-sunset daily. 9175 Willis Church Road. 804-226-1981 or nps.gov/rich

Richmond National Battlefield Park

Richmond National Battlefield Park comprises 13 park units across Richmond and Hanover, Henrico, and Chesterfield counties. Its three visitor center locations (Chimborazo Medical Museum, Cold Harbor Visitor Center and Shelton House at Rural Plains) offer information to educate visitors about park sites and their stories. 804-226-1981 or nps.gov/rich

Totopotomoy Creek Battlefield at Rural Plains

A walking trail traverses terrain where Union and Confederate armies clashed in 1864. The Shelton House, built around 1723, survived the onslaught of cannon fire. Grounds open sunrise-sunset daily. The Shelton House is open weekends. 7273 Studley Road. 804-226-1981 or nps.gov/rich

White House of the Confederacy

The one-time home of Confederate President Jefferson Davis. Guided tours offered; tickets available online and at the Tredegar Visitor Center. Tour times vary daily. 1201 E. Clay St. 804-649-1861 or acwm.org

BLACK CULTURE

African Burial Ground

The first designated burial ground of enslaved and free residents of African ancestry, dating to the mid-1700s. Today, it's a grass-covered memorial park. 1540 E. Broad St. richmondcemeteries.org

Arthur Ashe Jr. Monument

Statue of tennis champion Arthur Ashe, who was born in Richmond. Intersection of Roseneath Road and Monument Avenue.

Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson Monument

Aluminum statue facing the intersection where the entertainer Bill "Bojangles" Robinson paid to have a spotlight placed. Triangle Park at Leigh Street and Chamberlayne Parkway.

Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia

Exhibitions commemorate the accomplishments of Black Virginians. Open Wednesday-Saturday. 122 W. Leigh St. 804-780-9093 or blackhistorymuseum.org

BLK RVA

Explores Black culture in the Richmond region. This free online travel planner shares local restaurants, Black experiences and events that connect to the past, celebrate the present and look to

the future. visitblkva.com

Devil's Half Acre

Robert Lumpkin opened a slave jail at this site in 1844. A proposed Shockoe Area Memorial Park would include green space and a heritage center. Shockoe Bottom near the intersection of East Broad Street and I-95.

Elegba Folklore Society

The society's cultural center displays art and material from around the African diaspora. Check in to be informed about annual cultural festivals, tours and performances. 101 E. Broad St. 804-644-3900 or efsinc.org

Emancipation Proclamation and Freedom Monument

In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery in 2021, two bronze statues representing newly freed people were unveiled on Brown's Island. mlkcommission.dls.virginia.gov

First African Baptist Church

Founded in 1841, this church has counted Maggie L. Walker and former Gov. L. Douglas Wilder among its worshippers. The original building is on the Virginia Commonwealth University campus at Broad and College streets. In 1955, the congregation relocated to 2700 Hanes Ave. in Barton Heights. 804-329-7279 or firstafricanbaptist.org

The Hanover County Black Heritage Society

Preserving the history of African Americans in Hanover County, this society helps visitors learn about the accomplishments of current and former citizens. 114 N. Railroad Ave. (at The Henry Clay Inn). 804-496-6350 or facebook.com/hcbhs or hanoverbhs.org

The Hippodrome Theater

An active performance space today, it played host to Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong in the early 20th century. The historic space also hosts a Sunday brunch. 528 N. Second St. 804-308-2913 or hippodromerichmond.com

Historic Jackson Ward

A National Historic Landmark, this neighborhood became a cultural hub for the African American community by the early 1900s. Jackson Ward is roughly bounded by Fourth, Marshall and Smith streets and I-95. dhr.virginia.gov

L. Douglas Wilder Library

This Virginia Union University library contains a rare book collection as well as a collection of papers, photos and recordings pertaining to the nation's first elected

African American governor. Public admittance by appointment.

1500 N. Lombardy St. 804-257-5600 or vu.edu

Maggie L. Walker Monument

Bronze statue commemorating activist Maggie L. Walker. Intersection of Adams and Broad streets.

Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site

Commemorates the life of Maggie L. Walker, a civil rights activist, fraternal leader and entrepreneur — the first African American woman in the United States to charter a bank. 600 N. Second St. 804-771-2017 or nps.gov/mawa

Parsons Community Center

A permanent exhibition honors three generations of the Parsons family, enslaved people who were associated with the Sheppard family from 1809 to 1939. Open Wednesday through Sunday. 3400 Mountain Road. 804-652-1455 or henrico.gov/rec/places/meadow-farm

Richmond Night Market

Open-air market held from 5 to 9 p.m. on second Saturdays, April-December. It highlights community and diverse artists with music, kid's activities and interactive experiences. 17th Street Market, 100 N. 17th St. richmondnightmarketva.com

Richmond Slavery Reconciliation Statue

This 15-foot bronze sculpture completes the triangle of Richmond; the city of Liverpool, England; and the Republic of Benin, each of which played a role in the slave trade. 15th and East Main streets. virginia.org/listing/slavery-reconciliation-statue/4648

'Rumors Of War'

World-renowned artist Kehinde Wiley's bronze statue depicts a young African American male outfitted in streetwear riding a horse. Located near the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts entrance, 200 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd. vmfa.museum

Trail Of Enslaved Africans

Walking trail chronicling the history of trading enslaved people, beginning at Manchester Docks. Guided tours offered. efsinc.org/tours

Virginia Black Restaurant Experience

A celebration of Black-owned restaurants culminates with two weeklong events in March and September. It also sponsors the Heart and Soul Festival in July, highlighting cuisine, urban art and more. rbre365.com ■



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ROLL THE CREDITS

Richmond inspires hit TV shows, blockbuster movies and award-winning films BY LAURA ANDERS LEE

Richmond plays a role in some of this year's most anticipated shows — whether it's "Scarpetta," starring Nicole Kidman and Jamie Lee Curtis, or "Atlantis," the semi-autobiographical musical by Pharrell Williams.

The region is no stranger to the small or big screens, serving as a filming location for numerous television and movie projects over the years including Steven Spielberg's "Lincoln," Showtime's "Homeland," AMC's "The Walking Dead: World Beyond" and Hulu's "Dopesick" starring Michael Keaton. During summer 2024, Richmond once again buzzed with excitement as production crews and celebrities shot scenes around town for "Atlantis." The film is named for the Virginia Beach apartments where Williams, the pop and R&B artist behind "Happy," grew up. He often credits his hometown's culture and community for his success — the musician has 13 Grammy awards and an Oscar nod.

"The movie is about love, community and family and pursuing your dream," says Andy Edmunds, director of the Virginia Film Office, who worked closely on the project. "It's really a postcard and a love letter to Virginia."

The film features Portsmouth native Missy Elliott, along with actors Da'Vine Joy Randolph, Quinta Brunson and Tim Meadows, and is directed by Michel Gondry, who won an Academy Award for "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind."

"Atlantis" had an economic impact of \$80 million in Virginia, and hundreds of locals participated in the film, from professional set



Set in Richmond and additional locations, "Scarpetta" was filmed in Nashville and stars Nicole Kidman, Jamie Lee Curtis and Ariana DeBose.

builders and camera crews to everyday people who served as extras. The movie's theatrical release is scheduled for May 9, 2025.

Amazon Prime Video is set to release "Scarpetta" early this year. It's based on award-winning author and former Richmonder Patricia Cornwell's widely popular crime novels. The main character, played by Nicole Kidman, is a fictionalized version of Dr. Marcella Farinelli Fierro, Virginia's first female chief medical examiner.

"She's the inspiration for Dr. Scarpetta," Cornwell says. "I had the amazing good fortune of working with one of the most talented medical examiners in the country, who happened to be a woman, back in a day where there weren't many."

Cornwell met Fierro in Richmond in 1984 while researching forensic science for her first book. She got her

big break in 1990 with "Postmortem," a novel based on a string of real-life murders that rattled the Richmond area.

"The Timothy Spencer case was the first time DNA was used to convict a serial killer in the United States," Cornwell says. "I was working at the morgue with Marcella at that time. I'll never ever forget how terrifying it was for everybody."

While the show is filmed in Nashville, Tennessee, fans will recognize plenty of Richmond references. "It has the DNA of my books, but at the same time it offers some new things, so you get something extra," says Cornwell, who makes a cameo in one of the episodes. As of press time, an official release date has yet to be announced for "Scarpetta," but Amazon has picked up the series for at least two seasons.

COURTESY PATRICIA CORNWELL

The “Daughters” documentary began streaming on Netflix in August 2024 after receiving two top awards at the Sundance Film Festival. At press time, the documentary feature film had made the short list for the 97th Academy Awards. Chesterfield resident and CEO of Girls for a Change Angela Patton wrote and directed the film. The documentary follows four girls in the program Date With Dad, in which Patton facilitated a father-daughter dance in prison. Award-winning actor Kerry Washington served as an executive producer alongside Patton. “Daughters” is available to stream now.

Written by Hopewell native Lamar Giles, the young adult novel “The Getaway” is being adapted into a TV series by Sony Pictures. Several producers sought rights to the story, but Giles ultimately selected actor Don Cheadle’s company, This Radicle Act.

“Of course I knew and admired Don Cheadle’s body of work, but more important than that, for me, were the people he surrounded him-

self with,” Giles says. “They understand what’s important and unique about ‘The Getaway,’ and that means the world to me.”

The hero of his dystopian thriller is Jay Butler, a Black 16-year-old. Just 13% of children’s literature features a Black primary character, according to the Cooperative Children’s Book Center. For updates on the release of the television series, visit lamargiles.com.

Locations throughout the state were used to shoot “Written by Mike,” an independent picture written and directed by local filmmaker Ryan Cudahy. He attended James Madison University for video production before working on the Kevin Durant-inspired TV series “Swagger,” which was also filmed in Virginia. “Written by Mike” was primarily produced in Fredericksburg, where Cudahy founded the Fredericksburg Film Festival last year. The film is currently available from GreenApple Entertainment via its GreenApple Go free streaming service.

The coming-of-age comedy

“Griffin in Summer” was shot in Richmond and premiered at the Tribeca Festival last year, where it won Best U.S. Narrative Feature, Best Screenplay and a Special Jury Mention for director Nicholas Colia. Learn more about it at tribecafilm.com. Additional 2024 festival coverage, plus the film trailer and interviews with the cast, can be viewed on YouTube.

The dark romantic comedy “Toxic” from Richmond-based writer and producer Eric Brown, doing business as Cinnamon Brown, is currently streaming on Tubi. His megachurch drama “Sundays After Church” will soon follow.

“My books would not sell under my name. People would say, ‘You’re a guy, you don’t know anything about women,’” Brown quips. “So, I created the pen name Cinnamon Brown, and my book went No. 1 on Amazon. I love doing relationship-based entertainment women want to see.”

Brown moved to Richmond three years ago and started volunteering as an extra in various films, where he met crew members and actors. “This whole area is a real hotbed of technical and acting talent,” he says. “About 95% of who I use [in my projects] are from Richmond.”

According to MovieMaker Magazine, Richmond ranks among the top 10 small cities to live and work in the film industry. The publication’s 2024 list places RVA in the same company as Boulder, Colorado; Fort Lauderdale, Florida; and Savannah, Georgia. Virginia’s tax credit program ranges from 20% to 40% for film, TV and commercials.

“Richmond has this creative energy, from our cinema program at VCU [Virginia Commonwealth University] to the super-talented production community,” says the Virginia Film Office’s Edmunds. “And Richmond offers such a versatile location palette for storytelling.” ■



Author Patricia Cornwell (right) sits in on the production of “Scarpetta,” a streaming series based on her popular crime novels.

FILM FESTIVALS

A guide to local film screenings

Year-Round

Silent Music Revival

Silent films with improvised music by local bands and performers. Various dates and locations. facebook.com/silentmusicrevival

January 2026

James River Short Film Showcase

Virginia's oldest juried film competition will screen and evaluate short films at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. jamesriverfilm.org

January 2026

Israeli & Jewish Film Festival

The 17th annual festival celebrates Israel through award-winning films. Weinstein JCC. 804-285-6500 or weinsteinjcc.org

February-December

Created Equal Film Series

A series of documentary films exploring diversity and equity-based themes including race, housing, environment, immigration,

and more. The Created Equal Film Series was established in 2013 by the Virginia Museum of History & Culture to honor the Rev. Grady Powell, a museum trustee and Virginia civil rights activist. 804-340-1800 or virginiahistory.org

March 13-15

Banff Centre Mountain Film Festival World Tour

Wild, exotic locales are celebrated in selected films. There are virtual and live programs available. James River High School. 804-748-1623, chesterfield.gov or banffcentre.ca

April TBD

The James River Film Festival

Richmond's longest-running film festival is held at the Byrd Theatre, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, VCU's Grace Street Theatre and other locations. Screenings include classic, cult, hard-to-find and visionary movies. Some screenings offer free admission. jamesriverfilm.org

July 11-13

48 Hour Film Project

A contest in which filmmakers have 48 hours to create a short film. BTM Movieland at Boulevard Square. 48hourfilm.com/richmond

September-May

ICA Cinema Series

Free screenings explore provocative films focused on issues affecting marginalized groups. Institute for Contemporary Art at VCU. 804-828-2823 or icavcu.org

Sept. 18-21

Afrikan Independent Film Festival

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, this ongoing series spotlights independent films by and about people of color. Multiple locations. afrikanafilmfestival.org

Sept. 23-28

Richmond International Film Festival

Screenings of more than 150 films from across the globe. Plus,

music concerts, industry panels and other media presentations. Locations vary. rvafilmfestival.com

Oct. 10-12

48 Hour Film Horror Project

Area filmmakers have 48 hours to create a horror film. BTM Movieland at Boulevard Square. 48hourfilm.com

October TBD

Inthrive Film Festival

Film screenings focus on the stories of those who were formerly incarcerated and features panel discussions, presentations and performances. Richmond's First Baptist Church. inthrivefilmfestival.org

Nov. 20-23

Pocahontas Reframed Film Festival

This film festival celebrates Native American stories and storytellers. Screenings are held at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and Virginia Museum of History & Culture. pocahontasreframed.com

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ARTISTIC MATCHMAKING

Two new virtual programs physically connect patrons with the arts **BY JOAN TUPPENCE**

The Richmond region is home to a plethora of arts, culture and music. With so much to offer, it can sometimes be difficult to choose your creative experiences or even discover what's on tap for the days ahead. Two local entities are working to assist the public via apps that connect patrons with the city's cultural makeup.

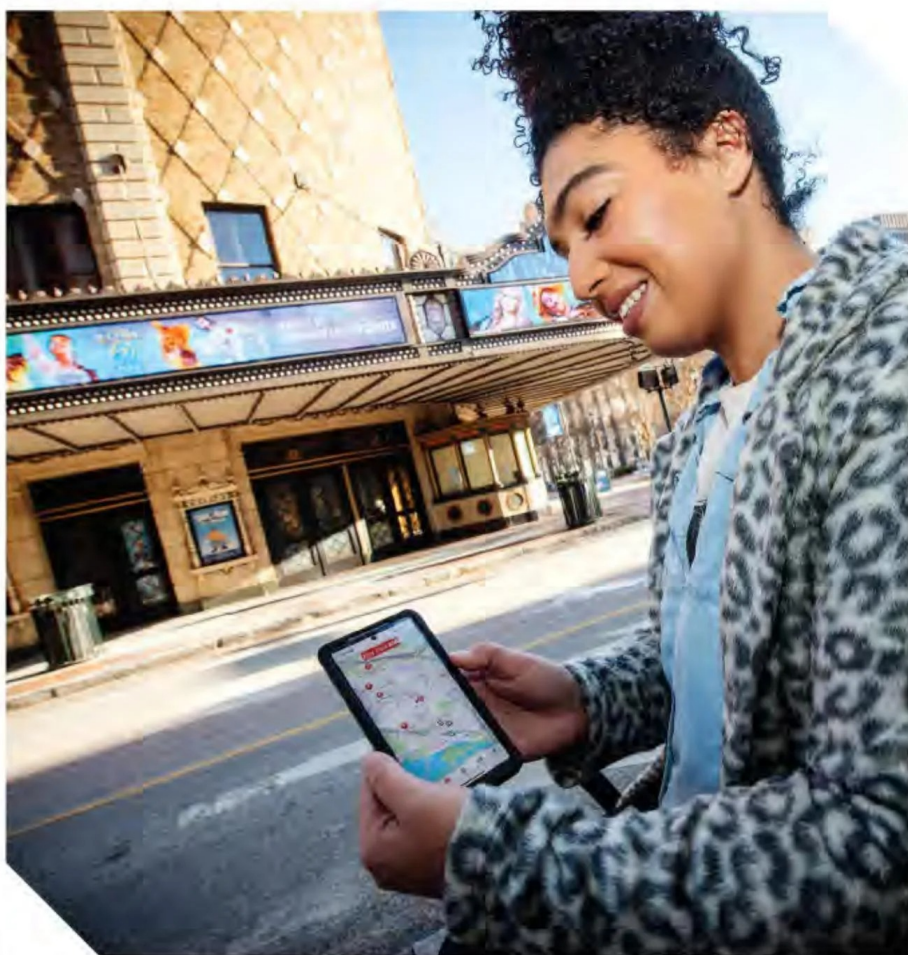
SEEK AND FIND

Richmond Performing Arts Alliance's virtual scavenger hunt, Arts Hunt RVA, showcases 40 arts and culture groups and organizations in the region through the nonprofit's app.

"We launched it during the pandemic to give families a safe way to get out and explore the city and learn about groups and organizations," says Jennifer Maddux, director of education and community engagement for RPAA.

The RPAA app, which is available on Google Play and the App Store, went live in 2023, replacing informational posters that included QR codes and were distributed to the region's organizations. The public was asked to scan the code on the poster to learn more about local cultural entities, but, Maddux says, "The app makes it so much easier."

Now, when someone gets close to a featured location, there is no need to scan a code. App users are able to access information about local arts venues, including pertinent info and exclusive video content. The digital assistant also allows users to discover where arts and culture entities are located and find places they may be unfamiliar with. "We are constantly adding new locations," Maddux says.



Arts Hunt will also host contests and other virtual events that give clues to secret locations or highlight a specific organization as a way to increase engagement around the activity. "Prizes will be given out to winners in the contest," says Ash Moore, marketing and public relations manager for RPAA. "We are encouraging people to visit these sites as a way to engage with organizations."

Those featured in the app include the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Studio Two Three, the Richmond

Bri Allen with the Richmond Performing Arts Alliance demonstrates the Arts Hunt RVA app.

Ballet, Gallery5, the Richmond Jazz Society and Cadence. "We have a nice range of different sized organizations," Moore says.

RPAA is continually looking at ways to keep the program relevant as a tool for visitors, newcomers and locals who want to learn more about the arts and culture in their community. The nonprofit has seen increases in participation, especially during the spring and fall and when new contests are introduced. "The biggest part for us is connecting all the arts organizations together,"

ASH DANIEL

Maddux says. "It's a nice resource, a great way to get to know what the arts are all about in Richmond."

MUSIC CONNECTION

Two years ago, it was just an experiment. Now, SCEEN, a live music pass, is a reality.

The creation of co-founders Luke Rabin and Bethany Lansing, SCEEN is a way for members of the community to support local artists and simultaneously attend concerts

around Richmond.

Rabin, who formerly worked in the record industry, understands how difficult it can be for local musicians to make a decent living. "It's even harder when you are an independent artist," he says.

That notion kick-started the idea for SCEEN (sceen.co). Rabin understands that most music venues don't always sell out every show, and that often there is unfilled space for additional concertgoers. The idea is to

make those unsold tickets available to users of the SCEEN service, creating a sort of win-win-win for artists, fans and the venue, Rabin notes. It's a way to turn empty seats "into crucial support for local artists and venues," he says, adding that SCEEN has paid \$6,000 to local artists as of the end of 2024.

At \$20 a month, membership grants users the chance to attend a variety of concerts that aren't sold out. Think of admission in the following way: Most venues have a guest list. SCEEN is essentially a second guest list. Members simply have to reveal their unique mobile pass on the app, similar to a ticket, to gain admission.

"It's like being on the guest list at a concert," Rabin says.

SCEEN is focused on smaller, local, independent venues, such as The Tin Pan and Bandito's, that host regional talent.

"There is a shockingly great local music scene in Richmond. The caliber of bands and individual musicians is so good," Rabin says. "One of the greatest joys of this is that we get to see so much amazing music in town that most people have never heard of."

SCEEN's website features a calendar of shows to choose from and sends out weekly updates on performances. "If someone has a membership, we send them alerts," Rabin says. "It's a great way to see a lot of really, really good music."

Rabin says that when an artist enters the music business, they are often aware of the difficulties, but the passion outweighs the risks. He adds that developing the SCEEN service, "has been a humbling experience." ■



Luke Rabin and Bethany Lansing co-created SCEEN, a live music pass.

JAY PAUL

GATEWAY TO THE UNIVERSE

Ashland unveils its first commissioned public artwork **BY PAULA PETERS CHAMBERS**

The town of Ashland is leaning into its future as an arts and culture destination with the planned summer 2025 unveiling of its first commissioned public work of art. The “gateway” sculpture will sit just west of the intersection of England and Louisiana streets, close to the eastern edge of the town’s Arts & Cultural District, and will serve as a welcome to visitors, perhaps drawing them into the “Center of the Universe” — the nickname for Ashland’s downtown due to its central location within the commonwealth.

“We want [the sculpture] to be visible enough to say, ‘We have something interesting going on here,’” says Leslie Bax, chair of Ashland’s Public Art Commission. “We have a lot of tourists who pull off [the highway] to fill up their cars and their stomachs. With this [artwork], maybe they’ll find a community to come back to.”

The Public Art Commission was established by the town council in fall 2022 and “hit the ground running,” Bax says, quickly welcoming eight works donated by local artist Charles Sthreshley. For the gateway project, the PAC issued a call for proposals and in May 2024 selected a submission from Harry McDaniel, a sculptor

based in Asheville, North Carolina.

A working artist for more than 40 years, McDaniel has completed over 20 public commissions or purchases. For Ashland, he designed a sculpture of two twisting, towering aluminum arcs that will curve over the roadway. In the day, the brushed surface will shimmer; at night, passersby will notice tiny lights embedded in it.

Due to the discovery of a main gas line, the art was moved from its original planned location, requiring two arcs to be separated by three lanes of traffic instead of the former five. Another change included the addition of brick pedestals with inset plaques for text, a suggestion from town officials.

“I like the look with the pedestals,” McDaniel says. “It makes a nice transition between a very contemporary design of the sculpture with the historic buildings and does a good job of localizing the piece.”

McDaniel stresses the importance of localization. “One of the purposes of all artwork is to enhance people’s sense of place,” he says. “I hope people in Ashland feel like this is a good fit and something they are happy to have incorporated into their sense of the town.”

Bax shares a similar outlook, hoping

Right: Artist Harry McDaniel with a piece of his “gateway” sculpture; Bottom left: A rendering of McDaniel’s completed installation in Ashland



the community welcomes the piece. “So much of our current public art — our murals and bronze sculptures — speaks to our important and historic past,” she says. “Mr. McDaniel’s sculpture, however, leans into Ashland’s bold, exciting and growing future.”

The PAC itself has a full agenda for 2025. In addition to inventorying and mapping the town’s existing public art, the group plans to launch an Art on the Street program, which will invite artists nationwide to lend their creations for placement atop pedestals placed throughout Ashland.

“It will be a great way to keep local citizens intrigued and engaged, and I think our community is diverse and open-minded enough to accept all types of art,” Bax says. “Public art is important because it can start a dialogue. Not everybody is going to appreciate the art that we as a commission put on our streets. If you dislike something, tell us about it. And we want to know why people love it. I think there’s value in [both].” ■



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SEEKING TO THRIVE

Downtown creatives are working to develop an Arts District that endures **BY HARRY KOLLATZ JR.**

The Richmond Arts District, which today comes with its name in lights at its own Pulse bus dock, began almost a generation ago as a loose affiliation of arts and cultural groups and entrepreneurs. Christina Newton of Artspace, then the director of Curated Culture, harnessed those entities and organized the monthly First Fridays Artwalk which, during the early 2000s, became one of the city's hallmark attractions in an otherwise somewhat beleaguered part of town.

Today, on and off Broad Street, arts and cultural organizations and several stalwart enterprises endure, despite occasional disputes about what the Arts District is supposed to be and its boundaries — Pulse installation and parking issues, economic downturn, the coronavirus pandemic,

festivals ongoing and gone, social upheavals and the vagaries of municipal governance.

The Arts District is among the downtown areas included in marketing efforts by Venture Richmond, which promotes the city. Last year, the district was the focus of several initiatives by the group in concert with the city and the Broad Street Task Force public safety initiative “to provide a more inviting and safer environment, like graffiti removal, pressure-washing Broad Street, tree-limbing, LED lighting upgrades and holiday street pole banners,” according to Erika Gay, Venture Richmond's director of marketing and communications.

The district is also on the full agenda of new Mayor Danny Avula, who said in a statement in late 2024

Architect Walter Parks at 2-4 E. Broad St., the storefronts his company is renovating.

that “a healthy, flourishing arts and culture scene is an integral part of a healthy, flourishing city.” Avula built a working group that includes members of the local arts community into his transition team, a step that longtimers in the neighborhood say shows an early difference from previous officeholders.

Meanwhile, upcoming additions, such as Virginia Public Media relocating its headquarters downtown, could bolster the area's draw as well as its population, and current denizens have ideas for enhancing the district's future.

‘A MIXING BOWL’

Architect Walter Parks moved his offices onto Adams Street 24 years ago. “People talk about the problems of the city,” he reflects, “and the city's

JAY PAUL

got its challenges, but I've been down here all this time, and Broad Street is in much better shape now than it was then."

During a conversation in the lobby of Quirk Hotel — itself a testimony to the positive changes along this stretch — Parks recalls boarded-up storefronts and the characters who used to inhabit the area. "We had Duck Man, riding around on his bicycle and making quacking sounds, and Goat Boy, who had bumps on his head, and he'd bleat," he says with a laugh. "We were the oddity in the neighborhood."

In addition to designing new construction, Parks' firm, WPA Studios, specializes in historic renovation and adaptive reuse. One building rehabilitation led to the studio owning a thousand wigs. "We gave some of them, and some hats, to [Virginia Repertory Theatre] and then went to see 'Beehive' and saw our wigs in action," he recalls with amusement.

So far, no comparable trove has emerged in the three-story, circa-1881 storefronts at 2-4 E. Broad St., which Parks described to Richmond BizSense as "the worst building on the block."

Parks bought it in 2022 and is creating living and commercial spaces within. The apartments, he says, will hold their own personalities by keeping much of the old while installing aspects of the new and modern; the juxtapositions interest him.

Within sight of Quirk Hotel is the comedy venue Coalition Theater, Virginia Repertory Theatre, Candela Books + Gallery, Lift Coffee Shop & Cafe, and Bar Solita, creating a vital mix. "And that's one of the reasons there's energy here," Parks says. "It's a mixing bowl with all kinds of people."

THE DOWNTOWN BEAT

Occasions and events attract visitors to the Arts District. Among them are the almost-40-year-old 2nd Street Festival in Jackson Ward; First Fridays; Candela's "Unbound" celebration of photography; Gallery5's art, music and street fairs; and shows at Virginia Rep. Affiliations with the Richmond Folk Festival also bring liveliness, while potential spillover from the forthcoming Allianz Amphitheater nearby will remain to be seen.

Emily Smith, the director of 1708

Gallery for over a decade and a member of the mayor's arts and culture transition team, says Broad Street comes alive for events such as the conference of the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts. In March 2024, the gathering transformed downtown into a happening "Claychella." Smith recounts, "They had ceramic projects at so many different sites. If you walked around Broad Street, every place felt great. I mean, we had about 200 people come through the gallery every day that week, [even] on a Wednesday."

She also remembers the early onset of First Fridays when 1,800 people trooped through 1708. Foot traffic is no longer at those levels — Smith points to professionals working from home contributing to the decline — but it remains active and consistent. The point, Smith asserts, is that "the arts, whether visual or otherwise, attract people, [which is] why practically every venue in the Arts District pre-COVID is still here."

Among them is Elegba Folklore Society, which highlights all forms of African American culture. Its doors opened 28 years ago on a much different intersection of First and Broad streets. "I smile as I say that the Arts District built itself around Elegba Folklore Society's Cultural Center in the heart of downtown," says Janine Bell, Elegba president and art director, via email.

Other enduring Arts District businesses include the Ada Gallery, for 21 years John Pollard's spot for contemporary work, and Metro Sound & Music Co., which has traded in new and used instruments for 34 years. ART 180, an interdisciplinary arts nonprofit, has hosted workshops and events for youths on West Marshall Street for over a decade, and Black Iris, an arts-based social club on Broad Street, is celebrating seven years.

The success of those businesses >

A rendering of Virginia Public Media's new headquarters, scheduled to open in early 2026



COURTESY SMBW

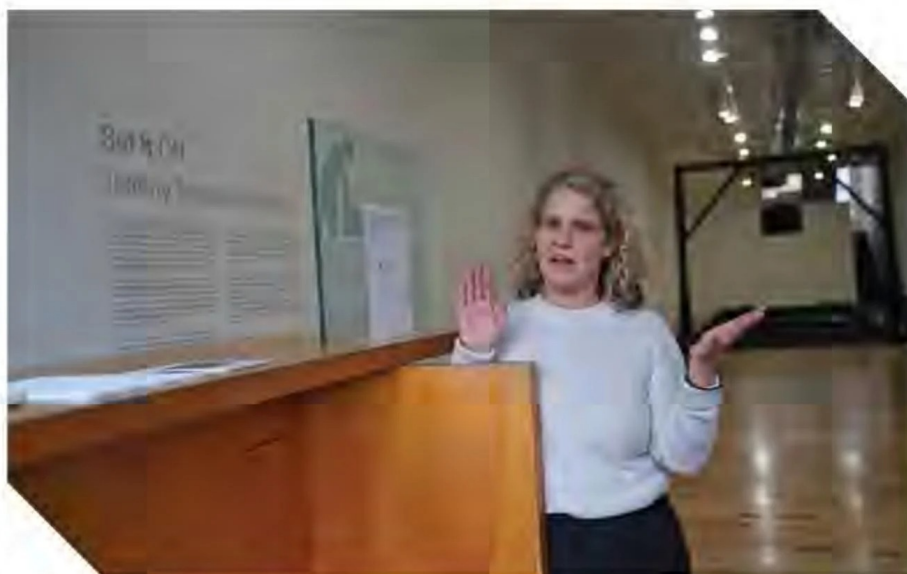
*"The arts,
whether visual
or otherwise,
attract people."*

EMILY SMITH,
DIRECTOR OF 1708 GALLERY

has lured newcomers, among them Charged Up, the home of longtime rapper and businessman Noah-O's entertainment company, and Supply, a recently opened art materials store, both on Broad Street. Of the building at 15 E. Broad St. that will house VPM, President and CEO Jayme Swain says the location "reflects who we are as an organization. ... We envision this modern media facility to be welcoming for all and programmed with events and engagement opportunities to encourage people to visit downtown."

VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

"We have some extraordinarily dedicated restaurant and business owners, galleries, niche shops and other entertainment venues," says Klaus Schuller, the managing director of Virginia Rep. Located at the center of the Arts District on Broad Street, it is one of the oldest venues in the area and an anchor for entertainment, but in recent years it has contended with wide-ranging financial challenges. "If not now, when can we lift up the Arts District?" Schuller questions. "VCU is getting closer to us, VPM is moving in, and we really would like to generate a plan to improve our block in a way that enhances and doesn't displace. This is a magnificent neighborhood and doesn't get the traffic it deserves." He'd like to see a parking deck built for use by patrons of the theater and nearby businesses.



In addition, Schuller notes that Virginia Rep's main stage, the November Theatre, was founded as The Empire in 1911, then in 1919 was purchased and renamed The Strand by Black publisher and businessman John Mitchell Jr. "He had the temerity at the time to be a Black man who owned things," Schuller remarks sardonically. As he works to right the ship at Virginia Rep, Schuller also wants to contribute to the neighborhood by better honoring the history of both Jackson and Monroe wards, although he notes, "There are no plans in place. This is more of a vision moment."

On Marshall Street, Gallery5 is in its 20th year as an arts and music venue and community space. Like the Arts District itself, the group has gone through times both fruitful and fraught. Board member and marketing director Ash Moore says needed neighborhood improvements include attention to years-vacant properties and additional street lighting. "Honoring the historic neighborhood and ensuring that the Arts District is accessible to the arts community should remain at the forefront of interest to reflect the

Emily Smith has been the director of the Arts District mainstay 1708 Gallery for more than a decade.

needs and direction of those in the district," Moore says.

None of the challenges confronting the district are insurmountable, although they require time and attention at both the administrative and community level. Janine Bell serves on Mayor Avula's arts transition team, working to support and forward the local scene, and is vice president of the Downtown Neighborhood Association in the Richmond Arts District. "We have discussed the need for placemaking and our vision of a locale pulsing with life — where great businesses thrive with food, music and art — nurturing the growth of downtown," she says.

When asked what she would do if she could magically improve the area, Bell replies, "If the Richmond Arts District is philosophically the heart of the city, as its geography indicates, I would ensure a demographic diversity of businesses and nonprofits in an environment where all can flourish cohesively, where there are sufficient services for human care, and where patrons and potential patrons can access with ease, feeling safe and welcomed. Isn't this what we seek as a city?" ■

JAY PAUL

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GALLERIES

Fine art, paintings,
prints and sculpture

1708 Gallery

Nonprofit gallery presenting contemporary art and providing opportunities for artistic innovation. 319 W. Broad St. 804-643-1708 or 1708gallery.org

ADA Gallery

Contemporary fine art by emerging and mid-career artists with a focus on painting and drawing. 228 W. Broad St. adagallery@gmail.com or adagallery.com

Alma's Gallery & Shop

Contemporary craft artist-run gallery with a shop featuring handmade decor, jewelry and other objects. 224 W. Brookland Park Blvd. 804-269-3973 or almasrva.com

Anne's Visual Art Studio Gallery

Works by 80-plus mostly local artists, Anne's studio and a gallery shop of prints. 208 W. Broad St. 804-644-1368 or mkt.com/visualartstudio

Art Works

New exhibits each month featuring contemporary art. The venue houses four galleries and 80 working artists' studios. 320 Hull St. 804-291-1400 or artworksrv.com

Artemis Gallery

Fine arts and handcrafted items including metals, sculpture, ceramics, wood and photography from more than 175 artists locally and worldwide. 1601 W. Main St. 804-683-5738 or artemisgalleryrichmond.com

Artspace

Member-operated in the Stratford Hills Shopping Center with a mission to promote the understanding and awareness of contemporary visual and performance art. 2833-A Hathaway Road. 804-232-6464 or artspacegallery.org

Atlas

Gallery exhibiting visual and performing art produced by youths ages 8-18 in ART 180's programs. ART 180's teen gallery, 114 W. Marshall St. 804-233-4180 or art180.org



Baxter and Elaine Perkinson Jr. Art Gallery

Gallery inside the Perkinson Center for the Arts & Education. Showcases artists from across the commonwealth. 11810 Centre St., Chester. 804-748-5555 or perkinsoncenter.org

Black Iris Gallery

Artist-run gallery showcasing work by international and regional artists in a variety of media. Open during First Fridays. 321 W. Broad St. 804-539-2213 or 321westbroad.com

Bond Millen Gallery

Contemporary art gallery with a focus on supporting living artists and growing the greater arts community. 5601 Cary Street Road. 804-966-0349 or bondmillengallery.com

The Branch Museum of Design

Elevates awareness of the transformative power of architecture and design through exhibitions, tours and educational programs. 2501

Monument Ave. 804-655-6055 or branchmuseum.org

Candela Books + Gallery

Art space and publisher dedicated to fine-art photography. 214 W. Broad St. 804-225-5527 or candelagallery.com

Cool Colors Gallery

Paintings by Mehmet Sahin Altug, arts and crafts from local artists and international fair-trade items. 3417 W. Cary St. 804-367-4066 or facebook.com/coolcolorsgallery

Crittenden Studio at Crossroads Art Center

Oil paintings and prints by Guy Crittenden. 2016 Staples Mill Road. 804-357-6027 or crittendenstudiostore.com

Crossroads Art Center

A 25,000-square-foot gallery space, more than 270 local artists and an online shop. 2016 Staples Mill Road. 804-278-8950 or crossroadsartcenter.com

The Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen

Rotating free exhibits in the Slantwall, Midway, Glass Door and Gumenick Family galleries. 2880 Mountain Road. 804-261-2787 or artsglenallen.com

Dementi Studio

Photography studio with a permanent display of historic Richmond photographs. 121 E. Grace St. 804-648-9003 or dementi.com

Eric Schindler Gallery

Contemporary fine art exhibited September through June. 2305 E. Broad St. 804-644-5005 or ericschindlergallery.com

Galleries

Visual and performing arts exhibited in a 19th-century fire station. 200 W. Marshall St. gallery5arts.org

Glave Kocen Petite

Pop-up gallery and showroom in Shockoe Bottom featuring local and visiting artist exhibitions. >



RIVER RUN DENTAL

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Nick Cave (American, born 1959), *Soundsuit*, 2010, Mixed media, 2012.4

RVA'S NEW GROOVE

The Allianz Amphitheater will open with space for 7,500 concertgoers **BY ADAM CHEEK**



Beginning this summer, Richmonders will have access to new sounds alongside the James River when the Allianz Amphitheater at Riverfront opens for live music and performances. Sandwiched between Oregon Hill and historic Tredegar along the downtown riverfront, the new concert venue began construction in early 2024. A joint venture between Live Nation and Charlottesville-based Red Light Management, the project was inspired in part due to the closure of the Richmond Coliseum, which served as a prime Richmond music

An architectural rendering depicts the Allianz Amphitheater when it opens for shows in summer 2025.

venue for nearly 50 years until its closure in early 2019.

"It was the fact of Richmond being an amazing, vibrant, culturally thriving city that was missing a venue of this size," says Kelly Flanigan, Live Nation capital region president. "We have a large amphitheater here in Northern Virginia and a large amphitheater in Virginia Beach, but we didn't have much in between. So, this was something that was a much-needed venue capacity in a market that is somewhat underserved by venues."

"Depending on the various events, we will be looking to host, at

minimum, 30 shows and hopefully more," Flanigan adds, noting that festivals, community events and comedy acts will take center stage in addition to musical acts. The goal is to schedule performances between April and October, contingent on the weather.

The lineup includes country singer Dwight Yoakam on June 21, singer-songwriter Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit on July 19, rockers Styx and Kevin Cronin with Don Felder on Aug. 6, and parody musician "Weird Al" Yankovic on Sept. 22.

"We've got a ton of other stuff coming," Flanigan says. "We have

agents calling us every week. [The opening] is very highly anticipated within the industry, in terms of agents and acts calling us to say, 'Hey, can we play the venue?' That doesn't always happen, so it's very exciting in that sense."

As of press time, no official opening date has been set, although Flanigan says to expect more show announcements leading up to summer 2025.

"The exciting part about our venues, and about live music in general, is that there's something for everyone," she says. "We'll have some rock shows, we'll have hip-hop and we'll have some local bands that are national bands, but Richmond's their hometown. ... If it's something that the city of Richmond likes, we'll be looking to do it."

The amphitheater site spans about 4 acres and the capacity will be 7,500 attendees, including general admission, reserved seating, the outer lawn and premium options. Ticket and seating options vary and depend on the show. VIP amenities and box seating will be available for some events as well.

The seating sections will radiate

out from the stage, which will be flanked by LED screens. However, the layout of the amphitheater takes viewability into consideration. Flanigan says even the seats farthest from the performers may not require the aid of the screens. "We think that the thoughtful design of the venue, and what we're going to be able to provide for both the fans and the artists, is what's going to make artists want to go there and fans continue to come back," she says.

The amphitheater is projected to create over 300 jobs. In addition, Live Nation will be working with local businesses on some concessions and hospitality. "Incorporating the local Richmond vibe is important for us," Flanigan says.

Parking and traffic are always a concern for downtown events. Flanigan says Live Nation submitted a traffic management plan to the city of Richmond and Virginia Department of Transportation. The organization is working with all parties involved to create a viable plan of ingress and egress for event nights at the amphitheater. She notes that the venue's downtown location offers access to street parking, as well as

accessible public transportation and the option for electric bike and scooter rentals and ride-sharing services.

"We'll be working with our business and residential neighbors to make sure that we are a good partner and good neighbor," she says. "For us to be successful, we need everyone around us to be happy with us, so it's something that we are very aware of, and we'll go through all of the proper procedures to make sure that we are putting together the best plan possible."

In addition, the venue will be participating in Live Nation's Green Nation Touring Program, which "will have robust environmental programs and initiatives," Flanigan says. "A lot of this focuses around single-use plastics, composting and diverting trash. So, this will be something that will continue ... and be an important part of this venue."

Atmosphere was also a significant consideration when scouting Richmond sites for the project. "One of the special aspects of this venue — you're sitting on the lawn area, and you're looking at the stage," Flanigan says. "You've got an amazing view to the left, where you have the cityscape of Richmond, and straight ahead you're watching whatever your favorite artist is. And then to the right, you have the bridges and the James River, which outlines the stage and is just very special. Being able to lay out a venue that way — you don't get that everywhere."

"We're excited to be able to have a venue of top caliber that we will be able to host and bring the city of Richmond together for some amazing live music on the river," Flanigan says.

For more information about the Allianz Amphitheater and upcoming shows, visit allianzamphitheater.com and @allianzamp on Facebook, X and Instagram. ■

The Allianz Amphitheater will offer space for 7,500 concertgoers along the downtown riverfront.





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Richmond Ballet

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Richmond Shakespeare

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Richmond Triangle Players

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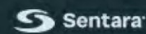
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Yes, And! Theatrical Co.

This nonprofit's third season of programming includes a production of "Cry it Out" (May 15-31), the "Narratives" cabaret and storytelling series, and a play reading program. yesandrva.org

PERFORMANCE VENUES

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Hosts Broadway productions and partners with performing arts organizations and individuals to bring performances to audiences of all ages. 6 N. Laurel St. 804-592-3368 or altriatheater.com

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The Ashland Theatre

This historic 1948 theater is a venue for cinema, music and live performances. 205 England St., Ashland. 804-401-7007 or ashlandtheatre.org

The Basement

Nonprofit performance space, art gallery and lounge featuring a variety of events. 300 E. Broad St. thebasementva.org

The Broadberry

Music venue hosting a variety of genres and artists. 2729 W. Broad St. 804-353-1888 or thebroadberry.com

The Byrd Theatre

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The Camel

Live music seven nights a week. 1621 W. Broad St. 804-353-4901 or thecamell.org

Canal Club

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Chesterfield After Hours

A variety of national musical acts perform on an outdoor stage Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays during the summer. River City Sportsplex, 13030 Genito Road. 800-514-3849 or chesterfieldafterhoursconcerts.com

Coalition Theater

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Nonprofit community arts organization presenting live music, art exhibitions, dance and more. 200 W. Marshall St. gallery5arts.org

Hanover Arts & Activities Center

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HAT Theatre

This professional black-box theater produces only RVA premieres. 1124 Westbriar Drive. 804-343-6364 or hattheatre.org

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from April through September. 900 E. Laburnum Ave. 804-612-1900 or vaculive.com

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University of Richmond: (theatre & dance) 804-289-8592 or theatredance.richmond.edu, (music) music.richmond.edu

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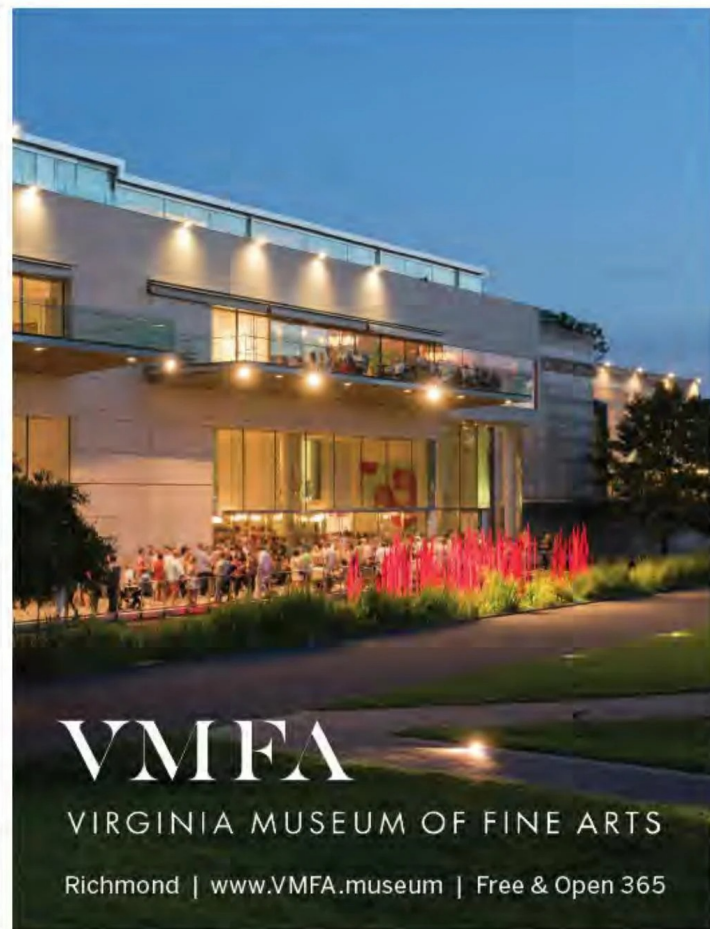
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LET'S GO!

Cheering on the home team creates excitement on and off the field **BY ALYSSA HUTTON**

From recreational leagues to professional teams, Richmond serves as a stage for spectator sports. It's home to Richmond Flying Squirrels baseball, a Double-A affiliate of the San Francisco Giants; the Richmond Kickers, a USL League One soccer team; River City Roller Derby, a league sanctioned by the Women's Flat Track Derby Association; and many other local athletics. Although the action happening on the field of play can be thrilling, there are fan groups and experiences bringing that excitement to the stands and sidelines.

TAKE ME OUT

Megan Angstadt, executive director of fan engagement for the Richmond Flying Squirrels, says that games at The Diamond offer entertainment for everybody, even those who aren't fans of baseball. Between innings there are patrons highlighted on the big screen, trivia and even races across the field by costumed mascots.

"Every half inning throughout the game, there's some sort of different fan engagement happening or entertainment happening," Angstadt says.

The game experiences are family oriented, catering to people of all ages. Sometimes patrons are treated to live music or giveaways prior to the first pitch and post-match fireworks on select nights. The Diamond offers happy hours, and "Bark in the Park" nights allow canine fans to join their humans for some stadium fun. The Silver Squirrels membership offers perks for people ages 55 and up, including weekly tickets to home games. Theme nights, such as military



The 2025 season will be the Richmond Flying Squirrels' last at The Diamond before they relocate to the neighboring CarMax Park.

appreciation evenings, games in partnership with Virginia Pride and Hispanic Heritage Month events, bring the local community together in celebration.

"We kind of look at each game as a different event to really bring in some entertainment," Angstadt says.

The 2025 season marks the final for play at The Diamond as the Flying Squirrels will kick off their 2026 season at the newly constructed CarMax Park, which neighbors the current stadium. Fans will be able to celebrate "The Diamond Through the Decades" on select nights, recognizing the venue's 40-year history.

Angstadt adds that the Flying Squirrels aim to support the community, whether that's through mascots Nutzy and Nutasha making appearances at local events or hosting coat donation drives at The Diamond. This will be the 12th year the team has partnered with the nonprofit ASK Childhood Cancer Foundation, which

includes having the children design players' jerseys for a special game night. The jerseys are later auctioned off, with the proceeds benefiting the foundation. Kids associated with the group are also invited to take a lap around the field at the halfway point of the match.

For patrons who are just looking for a good time with some camaraderie in a relaxed environment, Angstadt recommends the Bullpen Bar. "Everyone's hanging out there with a beer and their dogs, and it's a great way to just casually get to know some other people," she says.

THE REDS MARCHING IN

The Richmond Kickers are a professional soccer club that plays at City Stadium. The team's devoted and boisterous fan group, the River City Red Army, invites people to join in their spirited chants, red smoke celebrations and drumming.

Page Hayes, who is on the >

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leadership team for the Red Army, says that joining the tailgates before the Kickers play is a great way to get to know people, since the group is tuned in and attentive during gametime. There are sometimes themes, like Hawaiian or Halloween, depending on the season.

For Kickers spectators who are fresh to the area or first-time patrons, Hayes understands that being new somewhere can be a daunting experience. "The leadership people, if we see someone skulking about a little bit, we always want to approach them and say, 'Hey, how are you doing, have a drink,'" she says. "We try real hard to be welcoming and recognizing of folks, because we've all been new people somewhere; it's really hard."

The Red Army's devotion doesn't end with away games. The group can be spotted at local bars and restaurants hosting watch parties where everyone is welcome.

Beyond the cheers and chants, the

Richmond Kickers' super fans, the River City Red Army, keep the party going at City Stadium.

Red Army also uplifts and supports their fellow soccer enthusiasts. Hayes says the group has organized fundraisers for immigrants who have moved to the Richmond area, offering backpacks and other essential supplies. When a member was undergoing cancer treatment, all Red Army merchandise proceeds benefited the individual.

And don't be surprised to see the Red Army cheering on the Richmond Ivy, the Richmond Kickers' sister team, which plays in the United Soccer League's pre-professional W League. The team returns to City Stadium for a second season in spring 2025.

To learn more and connect with the group, visit rivercityredarmy.org.

JAMMIN'

River City Roller Derby is open to individuals who are interested in trying their hand at the exciting, high-impact activity. The goal of the sport is for a "jammer" to pass as

many other players as possible, while "blockers" on the opposing team try to stop them from passing, typically in a physical way.

Abby Sorese, a self-described "suburban mom with a corporate job," is a member of the Hollywood Undertakers, one of the teams in the River City Roller Derby league. She says the camaraderie and diversity of participants throughout the organization could make it a great find for those looking to find a place where they can fit in. "It's a good group of people that takes you in, kind of a come-as-you-are situation," Sorese says.

Roller derby is also surprisingly approachable, assuming those interested can take a fall. No equipment, experience or even the ability to roller skate is required. "We will teach you everything," Sorese says. "We have people join every time that don't know how to even stand up on roller skates [and with practice] they become excellent derby players."

And for those who would rather cheer on the action, the league offers themed nights and cowbells for an immersive fan experience.

MORE TO SEE

There are plenty more thrills to be had when watching sports in Richmond. Fan experience reigns at Richmond Raceway with offerings that get patrons close to their favorite drivers. Colonial Downs takes all bets during the live horse racing season. And not to be overlooked are collegiate offerings, including Virginia Commonwealth University and University of Richmond basketball, both NCAA Division I teams, providing fans with exciting local matchups. Mascots and musicians get the crowd pumped, such as VCU's popular, high-energy pep band, The Peppas.

Whether already a fan or trying out a sport for the first time, it's exhilarating to get in on the local action. ■

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SPECTATOR SPORTS

Auto Racing

The stars of the NASCAR Cup Series return to the Richmond Raceway Aug. 15-16; the NASCAR Truck Series is Aug. 15, the NASCAR race is Aug. 16. 600 E. Laburnum Ave. 866-455-7223 or richmond-raceway.com

Baseball

The Richmond Flying Squirrels: The San Francisco Giants' Double-A affiliate team plays at The Diamond. 804-359-3866 or squirrelsbaseball.com

The Tri-City Chili Peppers: A Coastal Plain League team, play at Shepherd Stadium in Colonial Heights. 804-499-3104 or chilipeppersbaseball.com

College Sports

Randolph-Macon College: 804-752-7200 or rmcathletics.com

University of Richmond: 804-289-8363 or richmondspiders.com

Virginia Commonwealth University: 804-828-7267 or vcuathletics.com

Virginia State University: 804-524-6831 or govsutojans.com

Virginia Union University: 804-257-5600 or vuusports.com

Horse Racing

Colonial Downs hosts the Virginia Derby in March and several races during their summer season. 10515 Colonial Downs Parkway, New Kent. 804-557-5684 or colonialdowns.com

Soccer

City Stadium is home to the **Richmond Kickers** United Soccer League (USL) League One team and the **Richmond Ivy** pre-professional women's soccer team. 804-644-5425 or richmondkickers.com, richmondivy.com

Volleyball

The Richmond Volleyball Club fosters the sport in Central Virginia. 804-358-3000 or rvc.net

PUBLIC GOLF COURSES

Belmont Golf Course

Renovated 12-hole championship course, a 18-hole putting course, a six-hole short course, a driving range and a wedge range. Welcomes players of all ages and skills. 1600 Hilliard Road. 804-424-3249 or playbelmontva.org

Birkdale Golf Club

Eighteen-hole course, par 71, reservations required. 8511 Royal

Birkdale Drive, Chesterfield.

804-739-8800 or

acumengolf.com

Brickshire Golf Club

Eighteen-hole course, par 72, semiprivate, reservations recommended. 5520 Virginia Park Drive, Providence Forge. 804-966-7888 or brickshiregolfclub.com

Brookwoods Golf Club

Eighteen-hole course, par 72. 7325 Club Drive, Quinton. 804-932-3737 or brookwoodsgolf.com

The Club At Viniterra

Eighteen-hole championship course, par 72, semiprivate, reservations taken a week in advance. 8647 Angel's Share Drive, New Kent. 804-932-3888 or viniterra-golf.com

The First Tee — Greater Richmond And Chesterfield

Eighteen-hole course at the Chesterfield location, par 66. 6736 Huntingcreek Drive. 804-275-8050. Richmond location has a renovated six-hole, par 3 course. 400 School St. 804-728-3857 or firstteegreaterichmond.org

The Golf Club At The Highlands

Eighteen-hole course, par 72, semiprivate. 8136 Highland Glen Drive, Chesterfield. 804-796-4800 or highlands-golf.com

Hanover Golf Club

Eighteen-hole course, par 71, semiprivate. 14314 Country Club Drive, Ashland. 804-798-8381 or hanovergolfva.com

The Hollows Golf Club

Three, nine-hole courses, par 35 each. 18-hole course, par 70, reservations recommended. 14501 Greenwood Church Road, Montpelier. 804-883-5381 or thehollows.com

Hunting Hawk Golf Club

Eighteen-hole course, par 72, reservations required. 15201 Ashland Road, Glen Allen. 804-749-1900 or huntinghawkgolf.com

Independence Golf Club

Eighteen-hole championship course, par 72, and a nine-hole The Bear short course, par 3. 600 Founders Bridge Blvd., Midlothian. 804-601-8600 or independence-golfclub.com

Magnolia Green Golf Club

Eighteen-hole course, par 72, reservations recommended. 7001 Awesome Drive, Moseley. 804-639-5701 or magnolia-greengolfclub.com



Richmond Ivy

Providence Golf Club

Eighteen-hole course, par 71, reservations required. 1160 S. Providence Road. 804-276-1865 or providencegolfclub.com

Royal New Kent Golf Club

Eighteen-hole course, par 72, semiprivate. 10100 Kent Field Road, Providence Forge. 804-966-7023 or royalnewkent.com

Windy Hill Golf Course & Sports Complex

A lighted par-3 nine-hole course and a regulation nine-hole lake course, par 35. 16500 Midlothian Turnpike, Midlothian. 804-794-0010 or windyhillsgolf.com

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(DR) 1600 Hilliard Road. 804-424-3249 or playbelmontva.org

Bogeys Sports Park

(DR/MG) 1675 Ashland Road. 804-784-1544 or bogeysportspark.com

Bryan Park

(DG) 4308 Hermitage Road. 804-829-6580 ext. 126 or rva.gov

Dorey Park

(DG) 2999 Darbytown Road. 804-652-1440 or henrico.us

Drive Shack

(DR) 1647 Four Rings Drive. 804-729-3778 or driveshack.com/locations/richmond

Dunncroft/Castle Point Park

(DG) 4901 Francistown Road. henrico.us

Gillies Creek Park

(DG) 4425 Williamsburg Ave. 804-646-5733 or rva.gov

Goyne Park

(DG) 5300 Ecoff Ave., Chester. 804-748-1623 or chesterfield.gov

Hanover Sports Park

(DR/MG) 11000 Washington Highway. 804-550-2622 or hanoversportspark.com

Hotel Greene

(MG) 508 E. Franklin St. 804-447-5958 or hotelgreene.com

Hunting Hawk Golf Club

(DR) 15201 Ashland Road. 804-749-1900 or huntinghawkgolf.com

Ironbridge Sports Park

(DR/MG) 11400 Iron Bridge Road, Chester. 804-748-7770 or ironbridgesportspark.com

The Park

(MG) 1407 Cummings Drive. 804-533-2966 or thepark.com

Patterson Golf Park

(DR/MG) 12586 Patterson Ave. 804-784-4544 or pattersongolfpark.com

Putt-Putt Fun Center

(MG) 7901 Midlothian Turnpike. 804-722-4373 or puttputt.com

Topgolf

(DR/MG) 2308 Westwood Ave. 804-977-6371 or topgolf.com/us/richmond

University Of Richmond

(DG) 410 Westhampton Way. 804-289-8000 or recreation.richmond.edu

White Bank Park

(DG) 400 White Bank Road, Colonial Heights. 804-520-9392 or colonialheightsva.gov

Windy Hill Golf Course & Sports Complex

(DR/MG) 16500 Midlothian Turnpike. 804-794-0010 or windyhillsgolf.com



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Challenge Discovery

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K1 Speed Richmond

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Peak Experiences Indoor Rock-Climbing Gym

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Ravenchase Adventures

Custom adventure races for any size group or occasion. 800-282-3169 or ravenchase.com

Richmond BMX

Premier BMX track located in Gillies Creek Park. 4200 Hobbs Lane. 804-245-1066 or richmondbmx.com

Riverside Outfitters

Tree climbing, guided whitewater rafting, stand-up paddleboarding, kayak and canoe trips. Kayak, canoe and stand-up paddleboard rentals are available. 325 S. 14th St. 804-560-0068 or riversideoutfitters.com

RVA Hot Wheelz

Rent a Polaris Slingshot and take an exhilarating three-wheeled, open-air spin around town. 3107 Old Hilliard Road. 804-592-1009 or rvahotwheelz.com

RVA Paddlesports

Whitewater rafting trips, kayak instruction and rentals, and safety courses. 1511 Brook Road. 804-898-0697 or rvapaddlesports.com

Shield N Sheath

Indoor recreational ax- and knife-throwing venue in Richmond's Scott's Addition neighborhood. 1511 Altamont Ave. 833-293-5263 or shieldnsheath.com

Sky Zone Trampoline Park

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Warrior course, parkour obstacles and SkyLadder. 1345 Carmia Way. 804-379-2500 or skyzone.com/richmond

Stumpy's Hatchet House

Ax-throwing venue at Stony Point Fashion Park. 9200 Stony Point Parkway, Suite 189. 804-592-6969 or stumpyssh.com/richmondva

Triangle Rock Club

Indoor climbing, fitness and yoga facility offering 45-foot-tall climbing walls and 15,000 square feet of terrain. 4700 Thalbro St. 804-215-3200 or trianglerockclub.com

The Virginia Axe Co.

Recreational ax and knife throwing venue. Reservations required. 2305 Commerce Center Drive, Rockville. 804-944-0152 or thevirginiaaxecompany.com

WATER PARKS

Cobblestones Park

Splash Zone water park, 5 acres of sandy beach and one of the largest concrete swimming pools in Virginia. Open Memorial Day-Labor Day. 13131 Overhill Lake Lane. 804-798-6819 or cobblestonespark.com

Kings Dominion Soak City

Included with park admission, Soak

City features 20 acres of wet fun. Memorial Day-Labor Day. 16000 Theme Park Way, Doswell. 804-876-5000 or kingsdominion.com

CAMPING

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Ed Allen's Campground and Cottages

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Kings Dominion Camp Wilderness

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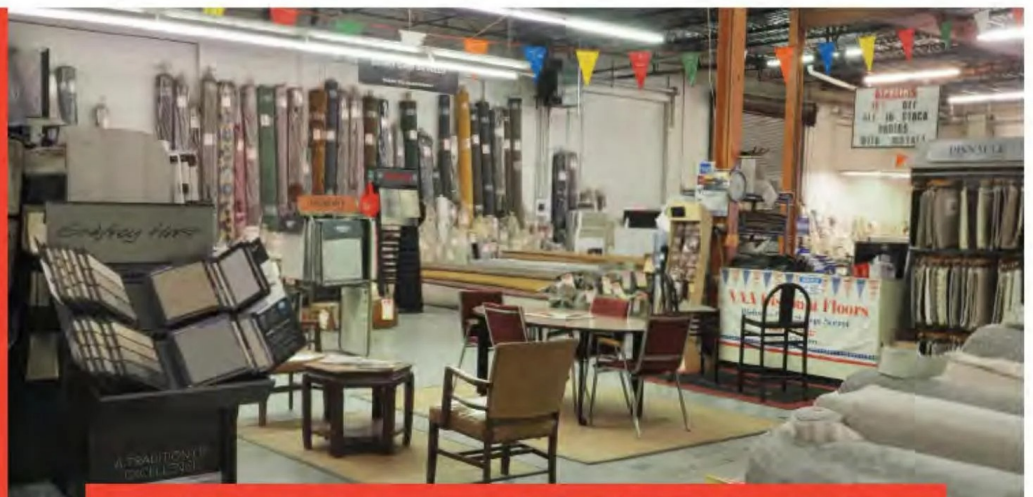
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BUCKET LIST

A new book is a guide to Richmond must-sees **BY NICOLE COHEN**

The oft-repeated saying, “You never do these things until someone comes to visit,” takes on deeper meaning in author Annie Tobey’s new book, “100 Things to Do in Richmond Before You Die.” The slightly grim-sounding title belies the book’s lighthearted approach to exploring the city, breaking down sites to see, places to eat and activities to partake in around the region. And the book’s cover — featuring a picture of a bucket — is intentional: These are experiences that should be on the bucket lists of locals and visitors alike.

The publisher, St. Louis-based Reedy Press, reached out to Tobey, a native Richmonder and award-winning writer, editor and beer columnist, to gain a local’s perspective for the guidebook. While Tobey was born here, she didn’t grow up in the area. However, after returning to attend the University of Richmond, she never left again.

Now a resident of Chesterfield, the long-distance runner with an appreciation for the outdoors has written for local publications including the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Style Weekly and Richmond Family Magazine. She’s penned travel articles and began researching and writing about beer in the 1990s, a subject she continues to explore for outlets including Mid-Atlantic Brew News and Spirited Virginia Magazine. She’s also a member of Richmond Beeristoric, which offers education and events centered around the evolution of suds within the region.

Tobey says the guidebook was created to appeal to the largest number of people, so the experiences are approachable for all ages and

abilities; examples include watching a film at The Byrd Theatre, biking the Virginia Capital Trail and exploring the creativity of the globe at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

“It represents a variety of activities in the region,” Tobey says of the guidebook. “The thing I find is, even for myself, we all kind of get stuck in a rut and go to the same place all the time, so this allows anyone, even a local, to say, ‘Well, I want to go somewhere new, so let’s look it up and see what they’ve got here.’”

BY THE NUMBERS

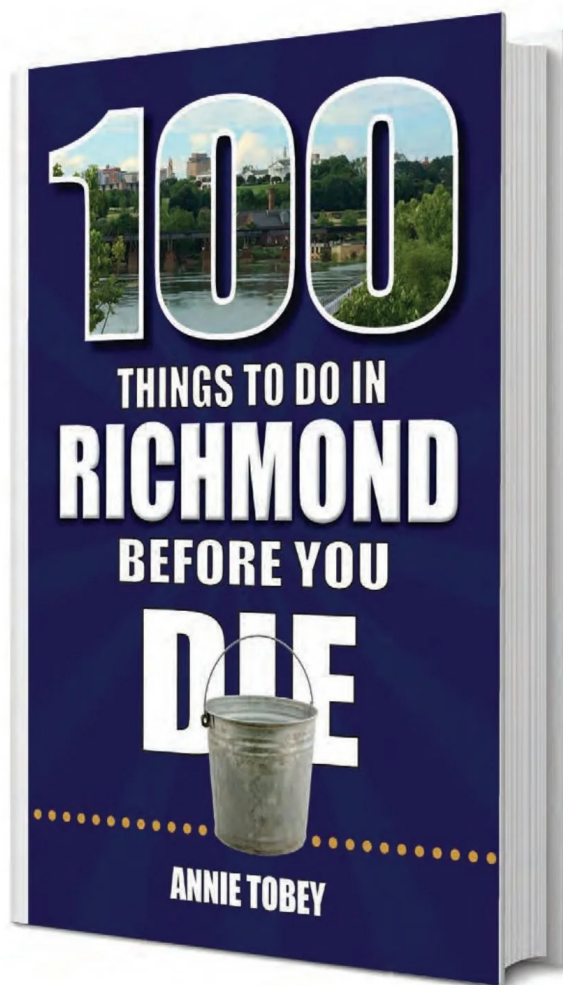
Tobey jokes that she managed to “cheat” a bit with the 100 things that are listed in the guide. For example, there’s an entry dedicated to the Church Hill neighborhood, but it includes several spots to dine, such as The Roosevelt, Proper Pie Co. and

Cobra Burger. By squeezing in additional mentions under one header, the number of experiences exceeds the 100 denoted by the book’s title.

Each item also features a creative header (Laugh Until You Cry at Local Comedy Venues, Get Derailed at the Richmond Railroad Museum, etc.) and a number leading up to 100. Tobey notes that there isn’t any real significance to the order. The guide is divided into five sections: food and drink, music and entertainment, sports and recreation, culture and history, and shopping and fashion. Each section includes about 20 entries.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

While Tobey admits the book could have easily been “200 Things to Do in Richmond Before You Die,” she had to narrow it down to the top picks per category. But even after some >



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An avid runner, author Annie Tobey pauses to take a photo during the 2024 Richmond Marathon.

considerable trimming, the guide is still chock-full of experiences.

As readers flip through the pages, they'll find recommendations such as checking out the local music scene at venues like The National, The Tin Pan and Brown's Island (which hosts Friday Cheers, RVA's longest-running concert series). Shopping for unique finds suggests stops at Carytown's "Mile of Style," The Shops at 5807 located near the intersection of Libbie and Patterson avenues, and the museum shop at The Valentine, which offers locally made items. There's plenty to learn and discover at historic sites including the Maggie L. Walker House, Virginia Museum of History & Culture and Henricus Historical Park.

Tobey says she selected places with staying power, especially when listing restaurants within the region's ever-

changing dining scene. "I follow certain criteria, like something has to have been around for long enough that it's not going to go under," she says. "I do include some that have not only the longevity, but [an] iconic status, like Ukrop's Market Hall, Sally Bell's, that kind of thing."

A FEW SURPRISES

Although Tobey is no stranger to the venues and sights of the region, she did put in the groundwork when researching the guide. This required visiting a few places she hadn't been to herself.

"I had not been to GWarBar and I thought, 'Well, it's going to be kind of niche. I don't know if that will appeal to a lot of people,'" she says. "I was finding out from friends that the food is great and it's a fun atmo-

A SAMPLING OF "100 THINGS TO DO IN RICHMOND BEFORE YOU DIE"

• ENJOY FAMILY FUN

- No. 33 Children's Museum of Richmond
- No. 34 The Metro Richmond Zoo
- No. 57 PARK365

• GET OUTSIDE

- No. 44 James River Park System
- No. 50 Dominion Energy Riverrock
- No. 54 Riverside Cycling

• TAKE IN A PERFORMANCE

- No. 30 Richmond Folk Festival
- No. 36 Firehouse Theatre
- No. 39 Godfrey's Drag Brunch

• EXPLORE ART

- No. 29 Visual Arts Center of Richmond
- No. 76 Richmond's Murals
- No. 80 First Friday Art Walks

sphere, so I went there, and I was like, "Yep, you're right."

She joined a Haunts of Richmond ghost tour and was pleasantly surprised to learn how knowledgeable the guide was and the amount of historical research woven into the experience. And attending her first Richmond Kickers soccer game helped her discover that there's as much fun to be had in the stadium seats as on the field.

Ultimately, she hopes readers use the guidebook as a reference and come to cherish all the region offers.

"Twenty years ago, I really didn't love Richmond all that much," Tobey admits. "We've changed a lot; there's a lot more to love about Richmond now. ... I want people to invite their friends from out of town and I want everyone who lives here to grow to appreciate it more." ■

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Chesterfield Berry Farm

Gather strawberries (April-June), sunflowers (July-August) and pumpkins (September-October). Hours vary. 26002 Pear Orchard Road, Moseley. 804-441-1034 or chesterfieldberryfarm.com

Children's Museum Of Richmond

With opportunities for the whole family to play and learn together, both of the Children's Museum locations offer interactive and hands-on programming for families with children ages 0-8. **Downtown** offers 44,000 square feet of learning through fun, from the Amtrak Train exhibit to the living tree house. 2626 W. Broad St. The **Chesterfield** location has hands-on exhibits including an art studio; the "Transportation Station," with a full-size firetruck and GRTC bus to explore; and an 18-foot tire climber. 6629 Lake Harbour Drive. Open Tuesday-Sunday. 804-474-7000 or childrensmuseumofrichmond.org

Cobblestones Park

Splash Zone water park, 5 acres of sandy beach and one of the largest concrete swimming pools in Virginia. Open Tuesday-Sunday. Also open on Memorial Day and Labor Day. 13131 Overhill Lake Lane. 804-798-6819 or cobblestonespark.com

Draftcade

Offers nearly 80 classic arcade games, 10 pinball machines, six Skee-Ball lanes and four arcade hoops. Hours vary; ages 21 and up after 7 p.m. 11800 W. Broad St., Suite 1090 (Short Pump Town Center). draftcade.com

Escape Rooms

Breakout Games, 9101 Midlothian Turnpike, Suite 700. 804-480-1211

or breakoutgames.com/Richmond

Escape Room RVA, 7025 Three

Chopt Road. 804-477-6369

or escaperoomrva.com

Gnome & Raven, 9200 Stony Point Parkway (Stony Point Fashion Park). 804-769-1415 or gnomeandraven.com

Hidden Gems Escape Room, 7057 Mechanicsville Turnpike. 804-634-0630 or hiddengemsescape.com

Red Door Escape Room, 11800 W. Broad St., Suite 1216 (Short Pump Town Center). 804-377-1244 or reddooreescape.com

Red Vein Escape, 108 Robinson St., Ashland. 804-752-1081 or redveinescape.com

Riddle Me This, 1404 N. Parham Road (Regency Mall). 804-608-9689 or riddlemethisrva.com

River City Escape Room, 8047 W. Broad St. (Westland Shopping Center). 804-325-3250 or rivercityescaperoom.com

Hotel Greene

Indoor mini-golf course in a grand hotel setting with a bar. Hours vary; age 21 and up after 5 p.m. 508 E. Franklin St. hotelgreene.com

Keystone Truck & Tractor Museum

Experience the last century of agricultural heritage with 125,000 square feet of fully restored antique trucks, classic cars, vintage automotive and advertising signage, and more. 880 W. Roslyn Road, Colonial Heights. 804-524-0020 or keystonetractorworks.com

Kings Dominion

Celebrating 50 years, Kings Dominion offers more than 60 rides, shows and attractions. Don't miss Rapterra, the world's tallest and longest launched wing coaster, opening in March 2025. Soak City, a 20-acre water playground, is included with park admission. 16000 Theme Park Way, Doswell. 804-876-5000 or kingsdominion.com

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

Enjoy year-round beauty, with more than 50 acres of themed gardens, a children's garden and a domed conservatory. See website for hours and dates of operation. 1800 Lakeside Ave. 804-262-9887 or lewisginter.org

Maymont

This 100-acre attraction features a historic estate and mansion,

gardens, farm animals, rescued native wildlife and a James River exhibit in the Robins Nature Center. Undergoing restorations, Maymont Mansion is expected to reopen by mid-2025. 1000 Westover Road, Richmond. Entrances at 2201 Shields Lake Drive, 1700 Hampton St. and 1001 Spottswood Road. 804-525-9000 or maymont.org

Metro Richmond Zoo

Features more than 2,000 exotic animals, including lions, sloths, pygmy hippos and monkeys. Explore by air via the Treetop Zoofari Zip Line and Adventure Park. 8300 Beaver Bridge Road, Moseley. 804-739-5666 or metrorichmondzoo.com

The Park

Duckpin bowling, indoor miniature golf, virtual golf and an arcade, plus dining options. Ages 21 and up after 8:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. 1407 Cummings Drive. 804-533-2966 or thepark.com

Richmond Railroad Museum

Restored 1915 Southern Railway passenger station with model railroad layout, caboose and Porter-style steam engine, as well as Richmond's rail history exhibits. Open weekends. 102 Hull St. 804-231-4324 or richmondrailroadmuseum.com

River City Roll

Enjoy 20 lanes of bowling with a New American kitchen serving seasonal dishes. Ages 21 and up after 7 p.m. 939 Myers St. 804-331-0416 or rivercityroll.com

Rockwood Park Nature Center

Exhibits include a honeybee hive, native amphibians and reptiles. Hours vary. Rockwood Park, 3401 Courthouse Road, Chesterfield. 804-768-7448 or chesterfield.gov

Science Museum Of Virginia

Through experiential exhibits, animals, planetarium and laser shows, makerspaces, demos, and more, the museum sparks curiosity, encourages discovery, and generates ideas in science, technology, engineering, and math. 2500 W. Broad St. 804-864-1400 or smv.org

Slingshot Social Game Club

Classic parlor games with a modern spin, including SuperSkee, Ultimate Bocce and Extreme Duckpin. Hours vary. 3301 W. Clay St. slingshotrva.com

Uptown Alley

This 57,000-square-foot venue features 38 bowling lanes, an arcade, virtual reality, two bars, live entertainment and a full-service restaurant. 6101 Brad McNeer Parkway, Midlothian. 804-744-1077 or uptownalleyrichmond.com



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SHOPPING

Malls and retail hubs

MALL MANIA

Chesterfield Towne Center

The new home of PopUp RVA, offering temporary shops for local businesses, plus popular specialty shops, department stores, services and restaurants. 11500 Midlothian Turnpike. 804-794-4662 or chesterfieldcenter.com

Gayton Crossing Shopping Center

At the intersection of Gayton, Gaskins and Quioccasin roads, find upscale clothing, gifts, home decor and furniture shops. 9782 Gayton Road. [facebook.com/gaytoncrossing](https://www.facebook.com/gaytoncrossing)

Regency

A mixed-use community offering fashion and lifestyle stores, dining, and entertainment including pickleball, virtual reality and a trampoline park. 1420 N. Parham Road. 804-740-1518 or shopregencymall.com

River Road Shopping Center

Find high-end apparel, jewelry and home furnishings at River Road. Nearby River Road Shopping Center II features upscale clothing and more. 6201 River Road. shopriverroad.com

The Shops at White Oak Village

Features national chain stores for apparel, entertainment and pet supplies. 4521-4571 S. Laburnum Ave.

Short Pump Town Center

This open-air shopping center includes Pottery Barn, Crate & Barrel, and an Apple Store, as well as premier shops and restaurants unique to the region. 11800 W. Broad St. 804-364-9500 or shortpumptowncenter.com

Southpark Mall

Restaurants, specialty shops, jewelry, clothing and Regal Cinemas movie theater. 230 Southpark Circle, Colonial Heights. 804-526-3900 or southparkmall.com

Stony Point Fashion Park

Dog-friendly outdoor mall hosts a blend of upmarket favorites, such as Saks Fifth Avenue, Tiffany & Co. and Fleming's Steakhouse, and more than 30 local shops and restaurants. Entertainment includes CineBistro movie theater, ax throwing and escape rooms. 9200 Stony Point



Graybo's Sports Cards in Scott's Addition

Parkway. 804-560-7467 or shopstonypoint.com

Sycamore Square

This shopping center in the village of Midlothian has upscale consignment jewelry, clothing and dining. 1000 Sycamore Square Drive. shopsycamoresquare.com

Westchester Commons

This retail development at the corner of Route 288 and U.S. 60/Midlothian Turnpike includes a movie theater, national chain stores, and other shops and restaurants. 15786 WC Main St. 804-379-9292 or shopwestchestercommons.com

Willow Lawn

Outdoor shopping area offers a children's play place, fast casual restaurants, nail salons, and stores such as Old Navy, DSW and Ulta. 1601 Willow Lawn Drive. willowlawn.com

UNIQUE SHOPPING AREAS

Arts District

Specialty clothing shops, art galleries and a boutique hotel located in the Broad Street

corridor downtown.

804-788-6466 or venturerichmond.com/livedowntown/historicneighborhoods/arts-district

Carytown

Stretching along West Cary Street, the "Mile of Style" bustles with local dining, spas and unique shops. carytownrva.com

Downtown Ashland

Find a specialty grocer, niche boutiques, antique stores and restaurants along Ashland's Center Street and Railroad Avenue. 804-496-1434 or ashlandvirginia.com

GreenGate

An outdoor mixed-use complex offering local shops and restaurants, boutique fitness, and spa treatments. West Broad Street at North Gayton Road. 800-370-9004 or therowatgreengate.com

Lakeside

Stores offer a mix of quirky home furnishings, antiques and gifts. 800-370-9004 or visitrichmondva.com/about/neighborhoods/lakeside

Scott's Addition

Look for unique artisan-made gifts

at Stuff-RVA, antiques at Class and Trash, and vinyl records at Wax Moon. scottsaddition.com

Shockoe Bottom and Shockoe Slip

Retailers, including a bookstore and an antiques shop, are found in Shockoe Slip. Adjacent Shockoe Bottom offers additional stores. shockoeslip.org

Short Pump

A shoppers' mecca featuring lodging, retail and dining at West Broad Village, plus dining and locally owned specialty stores such as Tweed and Erma Jean at the Shoppes at Westgate. westbroadvillage.com/shoppesatwestgate.com

Stony Point Shopping Center

Gifts, stationery, children's clothing and more at the intersection of Huguenot Road and Forest Hill Avenue. [facebook.com/stonypointshoppingcenter](https://www.facebook.com/stonypointshoppingcenter)

Westhampton RVA

Local boutiques, bakeries, restaurants and shops in the Near West End, an area encompassing Patterson, Libbie and Grove avenues. westhamptonrva.com



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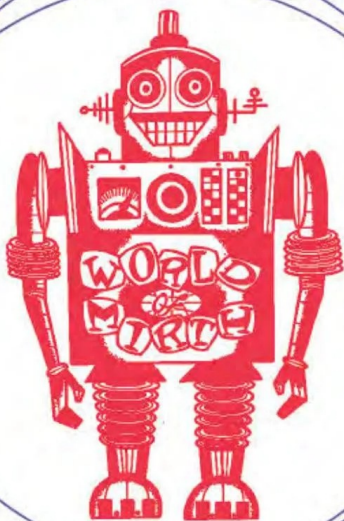
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- 100 TECHNOLOGY
- 106 SUSTAINABILITY
- 108 COMMERCE
- 110 DEVELOPMENT
- 116 RANKINGS

BUSINESS





COURTESY META

Our Data-Driven Future

RICHMOND HAS THE INFRASTRUCTURE
TO SUCCEED IN A CONNECTED WORLD

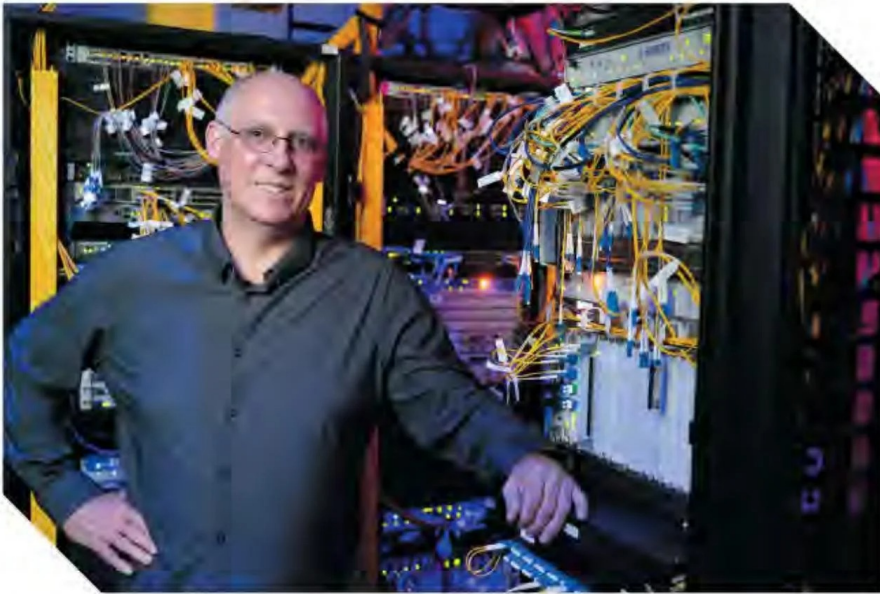
BY MARK NEWTON

A modern-day gold rush is here in Richmond, says John W. Martin, as the nascent data center industry rises to meet the information needs of the future.

As the president and CEO of RVA757 Connects, however, Martin's vision goes beyond the capital. He and his nonprofit coalition of business and government leaders see a global internet hub that stretches across the commonwealth, connecting the "megaregion" of Hampton Roads and Richmond to Northern Virginia.

It begins in Virginia Beach and Sandbridge, where four subsea internet cables make landfall, physically connecting sites across America and in Brazil, France and Spain. The data then snakes across Interstate 64 before it reaches the greater Richmond region's rapidly expanding data center portfolio, which directs most of the information northward to Washington, D.C. >

A Meta employee pulls out a server module within a rack at the Meta data center at White Oak Technology Park in eastern Henrico County. This digital infrastructure exclusively supports Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and other Meta services.



Scott Brown is president of Pixel Factory Data Center in Hanover County.

"When you add all these things up," Martin says about what he calls the I-64 Innovation Corridor, "it really frames this idea of digital infrastructure, and our belief, now more than ever, that those communities that have invested in and created policies supporting development from these big and small companies are going to be the winning cities of tomorrow."

MASSIVE GROWTH

To understand the recent explosion of data centers in Virginia first requires some explanation of how data travels across the internet to your phone or other devices. The fastest path between two computers is a physically close connection, as opposed to a wireless signal. To make Facebook and Instagram fast and functional, for example, parent company Meta has built more than 20 data centers across the country to organize and process the huge amount of information traveling between your phone, the physical digital infrastructure and Meta itself, all of which is happening simultaneously around the world. Remote work and video calls during the pandemic only exacerbated the role that data plays in our modern lives, and increasingly data centers handle demand for video streaming, smartphone

"There's never been in the history of Richmond any type of expansion that would even come close to this."

SCOTT BROWN,
PRESIDENT OF
PIXEL FACTORY DATA CENTER

functions, data digitization and artificial intelligence.

This massive information need has caused Northern Virginia — home to the federal government and the thousands of people who serve or assist it — to become the largest data center market in the world, Dominion Energy says in its 2024 energy demand forecast. The region is also larger than the next five biggest U.S. data center markets combined. A report by the state's Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission adds that "Data Center Alley," centered around

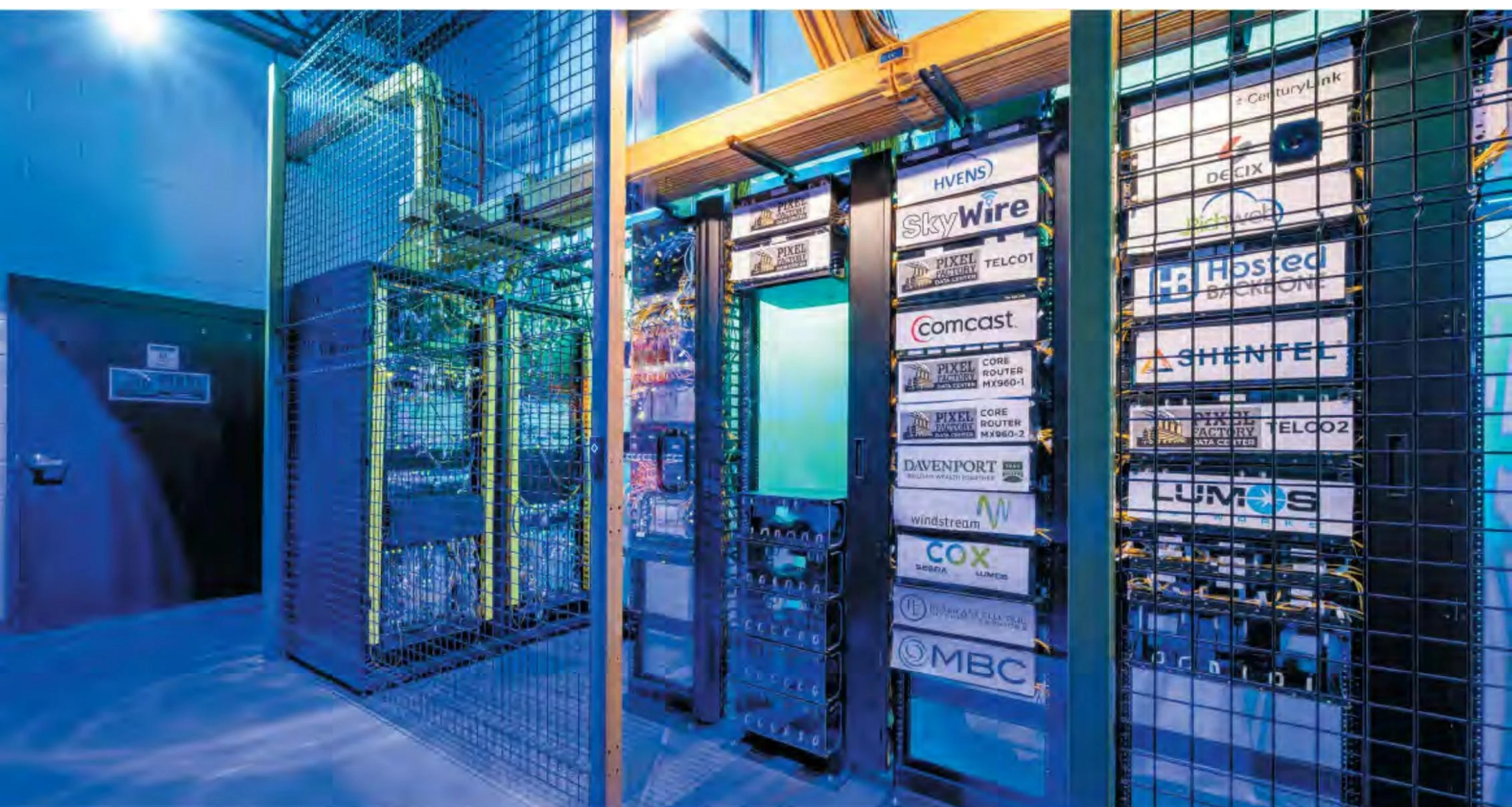
Ashburn, is responsible for 13% of all reported data center operational capacity globally and 25% of capacity in the Americas. As of 2025, JLARC counted roughly 150 data center sites in Virginia that collectively house 340 data center buildings.

Most of the nine active data centers located around Richmond were built over the past decade. QTS has been so successful at White Oak Technology Park in Sandston — where Meta is also located — that it is developing another 622 acres nearby to build what has been dubbed "White Oak Technology Park 2" and could host 13 more data centers. Chesterfield County has also become a hotbed of activity, including plans by Chirisa Technology Parks to build two centers in Meadowville Technology Park. And even rural localities such as neighboring Powhatan County are getting in on the action, with supervisors there approving an estimated \$2.7 billion data center campus in late 2024.

JLARC finds that Northern Virginia's success has come because of "a strong fiber network, supply of reliable cheap energy, available land, proximity to major national customers and the creation of a state data center tax incentive." As real estate is snapped up, however, companies have looked to other counties, which are happy to provide incentives to attract an industry estimated to annually contribute 74,000 jobs (mostly construction-related), \$5.5 billion in labor income and \$9.1 billion in gross domestic product to Virginia's economy. Chesterfield County, for example, slashed its property tax rate for data center equipment to \$0.24 per \$100 of assessed value in 2019. The 86% reduction, still current as of 2025, created what the county called the lowest data center tax rate in Virginia.

"There's never been in the history of Richmond any type of expansion that would even come close to this,"

JAY PAUL



says Scott Brown, owner of the Pixel Factory data center in Hanover County. "The Philip Morris expansion, industrial, electrical, any industry that has come to Richmond, there has never been anything on the scale whatsoever."

MEETING POWER DEMAND

Why here? In selecting a site in eastern Henrico County, a Meta spokesperson says there was "good access to infrastructure and renewable energy, a strong pool of talent, and a great set of community partners that helped us move our project forward." Meta and others are also able to take advantage of three DE-CIX internet exchange points in the area to help direct their data.

However, there are other, bigger factors favoring Virginia in data center site selection. The damage caused by 2012's Hurricane Sandy in New York and New Jersey was an "industry awakening," Martin says. Companies began searching for lower-risk landing sites for new subsea cables and the buildings connected to them. Many chose Camp Pendleton, where three subsea cables

come ashore near Virginia Beach, because the threat of hurricanes and coastal flooding is "relatively moderate," according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Risk Index. Both ratings are comparable on a census-tract level to Richmond's Capitol Square.

The state's relative safety from severe weather, earthquakes and other natural disasters also helps Dominion Energy reliably meet growing power needs driven by data centers. As of 2025, the utility provided about 3,500 megawatts of power for 450 data centers across Virginia, an amount of electricity that would power about 875,000 homes. In its 2024 Integrated Resource Plan, a forecast for energy demand, Dominion notes that it has averaged about 15 data center connections per year since 2013. In 2024 alone, it connected 16 new data center campuses that together have an ultimate capacity of almost 1 gigawatt.

"Power demand from data centers has about doubled over the last five years, and we expect it will quadruple over the next 15 years," Dominion spokesperson Tim Eberly says. He

adds that it's "the highest levels of power demand growth that we've seen in Virginia since the years following World War II."

In its plan, Dominion outlined what Eberly calls "an all-of-the-above approach to not only reliably serving all of this growing demand but also doing so affordably and with increasingly clean energy." Over the next 15 years, 80% of its new power generation will be carbon free, and nearly half will come from solar power. Dominion is also looking to build more small modular nuclear reactors, including one at its North Anna Power Station in Louisa County that would service Amazon, which is building two campuses in Louisa's Technology Overlay District. And in December 2024, Commonwealth Fusion Systems announced it's building "the world's first grid-scale commercial fusion power plant" at the James River Industrial Center in Chesterfield to try to make nuclear fusion more than a scientific dream.

Dominion's energy plan also includes new natural gas lines, which Eberly says is about increasing resilience. "We're all in on renewables >

Pixel Factory, among other things, provides a private internet network for smart devices and services to apartment complexes in Scott's Addition and outside the state.



Sandston is one of 27 localities in the United States, Europe and Asia that is home to a Meta data center.

and carbon-free energy," he says, "but renewables alone are not going to reliably serve all of this growth, and so we need to have reliable backup power for natural gas so that we're able to reliably serve our customers all day long, year-round, rain or shine, not just when renewables are producing electricity." The utility says its energy strategy and infrastructure investments allowed customers in three states to have power 99.98% of the time in 2023, except during major storms.

"Dominion [has] been great to work with," says Pixel Factory's Brown. "We're a small facility; we're under a megawatt. Dominion treats us identically to the big players, maybe not as much in price negotiation, but the price that we get is actually very good compared to all

the other states. They treat us incredibly well. Dominion is moving as fast and as furious as they can to get greater power."

CAUSE FOR CONCERN

Not everyone is happy about the explosion of data centers.

Opponents say their massive energy consumption isn't worth the tax revenue and that, once construction is completed, data centers employ relatively few people. There are also concerns about impacts to the environment and residential and historic properties.

The General Assembly directed JLARC to study data centers following the introduction of numerous bills opposed to their proliferation, many of which were filed by state Sen. Danica Roem, D-Prince William,

who compares the data center boom to a sugar high for tax revenue that destroys forests, creates noise pollution (estimated by JLARC to be 40 to 59 decibels, quieter than a typical conversation) and threatens historic sites. Roem says her 2024 bills were about stopping the state from digging itself into a hole, adding, "I'm trying to break people's shovels in Northern Virginia."

Roem points to Project Oasis, an effort to utilize abandoned coalfields in Southwest Virginia, as an alternative to continued construction in Prince William County. The project's main idea takes advantage of the fact that many of the mines are flooded, says Will Payne, whose Coalfield Strategies is spearheading the effort. The water is circulated through a data center to cool it off,

COURTESY META

Power Up

Eighty percent of the new power generation that Dominion Energy is building over the next 15 years will be carbon free. The remainder, consisting of natural gas, provides reliable backup power.

45%

Solar:

12,210 megawatts
150% increase
over Dominion's
current fleet, the
second-largest in
the U.S.



15%

Battery
Storage:
4,100 MW



and the now-hot water is returned underground to cool down. The energy savings from using the \$7 million system, he says, could be \$1 million each year for a 40-megawatt data center.

That geothermal cooling system is similar in concept to what is used at most other data centers, which largely tap into local utilities. JLARC found that most data centers use about 6.7 million gallons of water per year, roughly the same as a large office building. However, the report notes that 11 data centers each used over 50 million gallons in 2023, including one building that used 243 million gallons, roughly 10% of the industry's total use.

"The reality," Roem says, "is we cannot be destroying our environment, killing off our wildlife and harming the quality of life of the people I serve because someone needs [to save] nanoseconds for crypto[currency] mining or some garbage like that."

As far as power generation goes, Dominion maintains that its "role in data center development is simply providing power," says utility spokesman Eberly. "We have an obligation to serve every customer, large or small, in our service area who requests electric service — that's a legal obligation we have. ... Dominion Energy is not involved in deciding land use questions, where data centers get developed or whether they get developed. That's the responsibility

of the local governing body."

JLARC notes that, should energy demand fall short of forecasts or data centers close, Dominion's work to meet data power demand would leave it "with infrastructure costs that would have to be recouped from their broader customer base," driving up costs for all customers. The report recommends that legislators direct Dominion to plan for that scenario. One idea, similar to a proposal in Ohio, is to bill data centers based on their energy forecast, even if they use less. Another would require data centers to pay for smaller projects related to their energy needs, such as transmission line extensions.

Concerns over community impact have resonated with local officials in some cases. In Henrico County, a proposal for a data center near Azalea Avenue was withdrawn in November 2024 after the Planning Commission sided with residents who feared the project would increase noise and air pollution, traffic and industrialization of their neighborhood.

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

Should the promise of a data-driven economy become reality, Richmond and Hampton Roads are poised to become major players.

"We have a running start over other regions where their leaders just weren't as smart as we were and investing in this early on," RVA757's Martin says. Following a digital infrastructure conference in Lisbon,

Portugal, both Martin and Pixel Factory's Brown concluded that "we are the digital infrastructure industry's best-kept secret."

The word is getting out, though. RVA757's plans to advertise Richmond and Hampton Roads as a megaregion of 3 million residents convinced PCs for People, a nonprofit computer refurbisher, to expand here. Meta has given over \$4 million to local schools and nonprofits, helped launch the Center for Environmental Studies and Sustainability at Varina High School, and donated to the VCU Health Children's Tower. Henrico is also taking advantage of the flood of tax revenue, directing some toward an affordable housing trust.

"If you can improve the productivity per worker and improve your GDP," Martin says, "you can increase wages, and you can lift up even more people. ... The difference [for the megaregion] is going to be this digital infrastructure. If we can really harness this, it'll enable us to catch up to these cities and regions we compete against, but not necessarily by just bringing in more people. It's about making us more productive, and that's what digital technology will do.

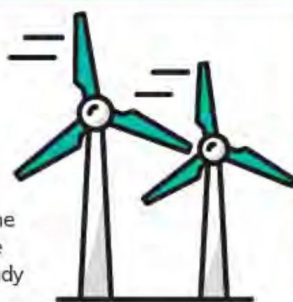
"When I look out into the future, he adds, "I see what has happened to us with digital infrastructure as the biggest advantage to not only catching up with the other regions we compete against but surpassing them, and that's profound." ■

15%

Offshore Wind:

3,460 MW

130% increase beyond the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind project that is already under construction near Virginia Beach



5%

Small Modular Nuclear Reactors (SMRs):

1,340 MW



20%

Natural Gas:

5,934 MW



BEATING THE HEAT

The Scott's Addition and Jackson Ward communities need to cool off

BY CALEB OGILVIE

The Science Museum of Virginia's front lawn, named The Green, has plants for pollination, slopes for collecting rainwater, tall grass for muffling the sound of traffic and young trees for a variety of animals to call home. Underneath those trees, another benefit of The Green is forming for future use: shade.

"These trees — they're smaller now, but when they grow up, this walkway is going to be so nice," says Jennifer Guild, the museum's communications director. "People can come out here and sit and enjoy."

In the museum's neighborhood of Scott's Addition and nearby neighborhood of Jackson Ward, heat is an issue. From 2016 until 2022, emergency medical service paramedics responded to more heat-related illness in Scott's Addition and Jackson Ward than in any other Richmond neighborhoods, according to research published in June 2024 by city and state health officials and University of Richmond researchers.

Organizations and city departments have developed multiple plans to provide relief from heat throughout the city. Ideas range from building more urban green spaces to using more heat-reflective surfaces, but some solutions have complications.



MORE GREEN SPACES

Some organizations have proposed using nature to cool people off.

Richmond's city-wide development plan, called Richmond 300, calls for reducing within Scott's Addition the heat island effect — a phenomenon in which buildings and roads raise temperatures where greenery is limited — as well as developing and funding parks in the nearby Diamond District. The Jackson Ward section of Richmond 300 says city officials should determine if a park can be built over interstates 95 and 64 in the neighborhood. It's unclear when those developments and decisions will be made, but the plan's introduction says it articulates a vision for Richmond in 2037.

The Jackson Ward Community Plan also calls for using lighter-colored roofs that absorb less heat and creating more space for nature in the neighborhood.

The RVAgreen 2050 Climate Equity Action Plan, developed by Richmond's Office of Sustainability, suggests initiatives like making a city-wide heat island reduction plan by this year and a plan for adding

Above:
The Green
at the
Science
Museum of
Virginia,
seen in
summer
2024.
*Opposite
page:*
SMV
Director
Rich Conti

vegetation and heat-reflective materials on roofs by 2030.

According to RVAgreen 2050's website, 24 of the plan's 136 proposed actions have been completed, 47 are in progress, 32 are in planning stages and 33 have not been started, as of Jan. 3. The office is planning to launch a detailed, interactive tracker listing more information, according to Director of Sustainability Laura Thomas.

The office is also brainstorming what the heat island reduction plan should look like and how the implementation tracker will be launched, she says. The plan will especially help Jackson Ward and other historically discriminated neighborhoods, Thomas adds. "We look at not just where climate impacts are the greatest, but who is also the most vulnerable and most capable at adapting to it," she says.

Richmond's Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities is designing a Parks Master Plan that will implement many of the Office of Sustainability's environment initiatives, including ensuring that every Richmonder is no more than 10 minutes away from a park. In the past,



developers have prioritized concrete and industry over shade and greenery in Scott's Addition and Jackson Ward, according to Jeremy Hoffman, an SMV scientist and one of the researchers of the 2024 study. While there is a park and many large trees in Jackson Ward, Hoffman says it has a lot of structures that amplify heat because the federal Home Owners' Loan Corporation redlined it in 1937, withholding home-loan funds or insurance because it was considered a poor economic risk. Scott's Addition, he says, has historically been used for industrial purposes.

"You [often] have wide streets,

short buildings and no trees," Hoffman says, "so you don't get any shade from the buildings. You don't get any shade from the trees and so you wind up with a bunch of hot temperatures in those particular neighborhoods."

In Scott's Addition, some residents have already converted alleys and roads to green spaces. Members of the Greater Scott's Addition Association created Rosemoore Pocket Park in 2020, according to Hoffman, who is also chair of the association's livability committee. Members have been planting new trees throughout the area with help from Groundwork RVA, the local chapter of a national

nonprofit that helps communities combat climate change.

"I'm confident, and I know that the Greater Scott's Addition Association is confident in this, too, that the transformation we'll see over the next decade is going to be fundamental and really for the better for our area," he says.

COOLING ON THE GO

The Greater Richmond Transit Company's plans to add more shelters and benches to bus stops may provide additional heat relief.

Shade from bus stops with shelters or a nearby tree can reduce surface temperatures by between 20 and 40 degrees Fahrenheit, according to RVA Rapid Transit's December report on bus station heat.

To address this, GRTC has proposed installing 160 new shelters and between 225 and 635 new benches at its bus stops, according to its infrastructure installation plan.

There are 112 bus stops in Jackson Ward and Scott's Addition. At least 53 of them lack a bench, and at least 76 of them don't have a shelter, according to the plan, which only lists 80 of the 112 stops in the neighborhoods. GRTC spokesperson Henry Bendon did not respond to an email asking about the discrepancy.

In its 2024 State of Transit report, RVA Rapid Transit calls for lighter-colored benches. RVA Rapid Transit Executive Director Faith Walker says the current black benches absorb too much heat. "If somebody did want to sit down, their butt would burn because the materials they're using [to make the benches] are too hot," she says.

Bendon says the color of the black shelters and benches in Richmond are determined by the city's urban design committee, but the organization could move to lighter colors in the future. "Everything's on the table," he says. "That's a cool idea." ■



CALEB OGILVIE



CAN-DO ATTITUDE

90 years after its debut here, canned beer is still the future of fizz **BY DAVID LEFKOWITZ**

Cast your mind back to 1935. Prohibition, which had outlawed (if not prevented) the sale of all “intoxicating beverages” for 13 years, had been repealed two years prior. During that time, “near beer,” limited to 0.5% alcohol by volume, had been the only commercial option. Even once beer could be sold again, it was available only on draft or in glass bottles. However, beer can be spoiled by light, and bottles require a deposit from customers refunded when the bottles were brought back. In other words, there was room for improvement.

Commercial canned goods had been on the market in America for over a century by this point but, according to local historian Lee Graves, canning beer presented special issues. Cans at that time were

made from tin-plated steel, which gave canned beer a metallic, less-than-refreshing flavor. Everything changed when the American Can Company invented the keg-lined can, which featured a liner made from enamel and Vinylite, a plastic resinous material. Finally, beer could be pasteurized, shipped and stored in lightweight, disposable cans, but that didn’t mean that brewing companies were sold on the concept.

Only Gottfried Krueger Brewing Company, based in New Jersey, was willing to give it a shot. On the ACC’s dime, Krueger released a sample of 2,000 free cans in its local market, earning rave reviews — but the company was still unconvinced. If the new cans flopped, according to Graves, “it would have really damaged [Krueger’s] reputation.” As one last test, Krueger

picked a market completely unlike its own: Richmond, where an ACC factory was located at the time.

Krueger’s Finest and Krueger’s Cream Ale hit city shelves on Jan. 24, 1935. “It was a huge success right off the bat,” Graves says. Soon, canned Krueger’s was available outside of Richmond, and canned beer was all the rage. Pabst Brewing Company started canning during that summer, and by December breweries in places as far-flung as Wales were giving keg-lined cans a shot. The rest, as they say, is history. By the end of 1935, more than 35 other companies were selling their beer in cans.

In 2013, Richmond’s Hardywood Park Craft Brewery released a cream ale with a flavor concept and can design explicitly nodding to the original Krueger brew. Fittingly, it was also the brewery’s first beer to be sold in a can. Like its predecessor, Hardywood’s cream ale was the first signal of a new path forward: The craft brewery phased out bottles completely in late 2023, citing sustainability.

“Aluminum is infinitely recyclable,” Hardywood brewmaster Brian Nelson says, “and a lot of municipalities aren’t even recycling glass anymore.” Cans are also cheaper to ship and safer to dispose of, according to Nelson, all of which makes them the eco-friendlier option.

Ninety years on, the future for canned beer and other beverages still looks bright. According to the research firm IWSR, ready-to-drink beverages “were the star of the global beverage alcohol market,” being “the only major category to record volume growth (+2%), alongside a strong +6% uptick in value” in 2023. RTDs, a sector that also includes hard seltzers and canned wine and cocktails, are also on track to continue growing and become more sophisticated “as consumers explore more premium options [and seek] more affordable and convenient alternatives to traditional beverage alcohol categories.” ■

Below:
Krueger’s
Cream Ale
was first
sold in a
can in
Richmond
in 1935.



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HOW IT'S GROWING

A sampling of economic and development projects around metro Richmond **COMPILED BY MARK NEWTON**

Charles City County

PROJECT: MARKET 5

Charles City County hopes to draw hikers and bikers on the Virginia Capital Trail to the courthouse area by creating a unique shopping and entertainment experience. Market 5 is envisioned as an eclectic outdoor gathering space for food and retail businesses featuring several modified shipping containers designed by ROXBOX, a Denver-based modular construction company. Adjacent to a creek, Market 5 will also host music and arts festivals and feature outdoor furniture, games, walking trails and amenities for pedestrians and bikers alike. A grand opening could happen in March.

TYPE: Retail and public engagement area

INVESTMENT: \$2.4 million

COMPLETION: 2025

Chesterfield County

PROJECT: CHIRISA TECHNOLOGY PARKS

Plans for an expanded data center campus are emblematic of the digital infrastructure boom in Chesterfield County. The former Capital One campus in Meadowview Technology Park — which relocated in 2014 — now belongs to Chirisa Technology Parks, which is co-developing the site with Powerhouse Data Centers. When fully built out, the campus could total up to 1 million square feet of data center space, allowing Chirisa customers to tap into over 700 megawatts of power.

TYPE: Data center expansion

INVESTMENT: \$2 billion

COMPLETION: 2027



COURTESY ROXBOX



New Kent County

PROJECT: CARMAX RECONDITIONING HUB

CarMax is expanding into New Kent County with a 78,000-square-foot auction house and reconditioning facility in the Weir Creek Industrial Park. Among other things, the Richmond-based used car dealer will use the site to feed inventory to regional stores, a spokesperson says, but no retail sales will happen there. New Kent officials have approved a \$150,000 performance incentive, to be given over three years, contingent upon a \$30 million investment in the county and an agreed level of gross receipts. Construction began in summer 2024.

TYPE: Business expansion

INVESTMENT: \$150,000

COMPLETION: Summer 2025

Goochland County

PROJECT: OILVILLE ROUNDABOUT

Officials are working to alleviate a major rush-hour headache just outside of Short Pump. The Virginia Department of Transportation will replace the unsignalized interchange of the westbound Interstate 64 ramps and Oilville Road with a single-lane roundabout to improve safety and relieve traffic buildup during the afternoon rush hour. Funding comes from a \$4 million federal grant, \$1.2 million in Goochland County capital improvement program funds approved in June and awards from the Commonwealth Transportation Board. Work is expected to begin in spring 2027.

TYPE: Infrastructure

INVESTMENT: \$7.5 million

COMPLETION: April 2028

Eastern Henrico County

PROJECT: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Home prices have skyrocketed in the last several years, pricing out local families whose salaries haven't risen at the same pace. In May 2024, Henrico officials announced the creation of an affordable housing trust, supported by unbudgeted revenue from data centers, that is managed by the county and the nonprofit Partnership for Housing Affordability. The initiative will provide grants to offset the costs of residential lots in subdivisions or other developments. The county will also waive certain fees and expedite planning review for these projects.

TYPE: Homeownership trust

INVESTMENT: \$60 million

COMPLETION: Ongoing

Western Henrico County

PROJECT: CROSSINGS GOLF CLUB

Henrico is moving to secure the future of professional golf in the area. Last August, the county's Economic Development Authority bought the 268-acre Crossings Golf Club for \$3 million. It will be leased to Midlothian-based Pros Inc. to improve and operate the public course with the hope of succeeding the annual PGA Tour Champions' Dominion Energy Charity Classic, which will end in 2025. The purchase adds to Henrico's footprint near interstates 95 and 295, which includes the Henrico Sports & Events Center and the planned GreenCity "eco-district" development.

TYPE: Sports tourism

INVESTMENT: \$14 million

COMPLETION: 2026



Tri-Cities (Petersburg, Hopewell & Colonial Heights)

PROJECT: FALL LINE TRAIL

A massive public and private effort to connect Ashland and Petersburg via a 43-mile paved trail began to leap off drafting tables over the past year. Several sections in Hanover and Henrico counties are already open, and work began on many of the other parts in 2024. Construction on the 9-mile Colonial Heights portion, which ends in Petersburg after crossing the Appomattox River, was set to begin around the start of 2025.

TYPE: Recreation

INVESTMENT: \$300 million

COMPLETION: 2034

Powhatan County

PROJECT: WINTERFIELD SHOPPING CENTER

Sitting just west of the border between Powhatan and North Chesterfield, the Winterfield area of Midlothian will soon be home to a bevy of new businesses. One is the first Virginia outpost of the Ivybrook Academy, a half-day preschool influenced by the Reggio Emilia and Montessori education methods. Another is Corner Rock Cafe, a coffee shop and ice cream parlor from the owners of Toast New American Gastropub and Sidecar Cocktail Lounge. The county's first Wawa gas station is also under construction in Winterfield; its second is planned for the Stavemill area.

TYPE: Retail development

INVESTMENT: N/A

COMPLETION: TBD

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Hanover County

PROJECT: TRACT TECHNOLOGY PARK

In March 2024, Hanover officials rezoned over 1,200 acres of land north of Ashland so that Tract, a Denver-based data center land development company, can build over the next 20 years the infrastructure needed for up to eight data center campuses with a total power capacity of 2.4 gigawatts. The county estimates that the site will bring in up to \$1.78 billion in tax revenue in its first two decades of operation. As part of the project, Tract is also giving Hanover \$3.5 million for road upgrades, as well as \$100,000 to enhance nearby Washington Lacy Park.

TYPE: Data center development

INVESTMENT: \$10 billion-\$15 billion

COMPLETION: 2028

Richmond

PROJECT: MIDTOWN GREEN

The space once known as the Bon Secours Training Center and used by the Washington Commanders will soon be the new home of Richmond's Parks & Recreation department. Once the existing medical offices are renovated, about 50 city employees will move from their offices near Virginia Union University to what is now being called Midtown Green. Since the Commanders stopped practicing there, the state-owned property has been the site of the Iron Blossom Music Festival and various sports tournaments. The city hopes to continue hosting events there.

TYPE: Government headquarters

INVESTMENT: \$1 million

COMPLETION: Summer 2025





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BY THE NUMBERS



THE BORDERLINE

Greater Richmond includes the city and the counties of Chesterfield, Henrico and Hanover. The larger **Richmond Metropolitan Statistical Area's** population is 1.35 million in an area that includes greater Richmond as well as the counties of Amelia, Caroline, Charles City, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Goochland, King and Queen, King William, Louisa, New Kent, Powhatan, Prince George, and Sussex. Other cities in the MSA include Petersburg, Colonial Heights and Hopewell.

FORTUNE 500 MEMBERS

- Performance Food Group** (No. 84, \$53.3 billion revenue, food distribution)
- CarMax** (No. 141, \$31.1 billion revenue, automotive retailer)
- Altria Group** (No. 196, \$20.5 billion revenue, tobacco products)
- Dominion Energy** (No. 230, \$17.9 billion revenue, electric and gas utility)
- Markel Corp.** (No. 262, \$15.8 billion revenue, insurance)
- Owens & Minor** (No. 388, \$10.3 billion revenue, medical equipment)
- Arko Corp.** (No. 453, \$8.2 billion revenue, convenience stores)
- Genworth Financial** (No. 477, \$7.5 billion revenue, insurance)

TOPPING THE LISTS

Richmond and Virginia lead the nation

Innsbrook ranked No.

1

The Henrico County suburb of **Innsbrook** was deemed by Niche to be **the best Virginia suburb to live in** and the 13th best in the country. It also ranks as the **third best place to live** statewide and No. 21 in the United States.

VCU Medical Center placed No.

2

In its 2024-25 Best Hospitals list, U.S. News & World Report again deemed VCU Medical Center to be **the state's second-best hospital** and, for the 14th year in a row, the best in the Richmond area.

Richmond is No.

1

RVA is **America's Best Town to Visit** in 2024 according to CNN, which points to its dining, drinking and outdoor spots, "top-notch museums and intriguing neighborhoods," and "impressive arts scene and a nearly year-round lineup of festivals." The city's efforts to recontextualize its Revolution and Civil War history were also lauded. "Now's a great time for visitors to see for themselves how Virginia's capital city has evolved," CNN writes.

Virginia placed No.

1

Virginia is back on the top of CNBC's **"Top States for Business"** list, its third win in the last five years. The commonwealth, CNBC says, has "the nation's best education system and policies that give companies room — both literally and figuratively — to grow." Virginia was also lauded for its physical and digital infrastructure, providing a wealth of shovel-ready sites and the internet speeds needed for modern business, respectively.

Average commute to work:

25.5

minutes

Of the 694,027 workers in the Richmond MSA, 78.8% took a car, truck or van to get to their workplace in 2023, according to American Community Survey's one-year estimate. Most others (16.6%) worked from home, and just 0.2% biked to their jobs. More than 99% of locals worked in Virginia, though 46% were employed in a different county from the one where they lived.

TOP 50

Richmond MSA's Largest Employers
Previous year's ranking in ()

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Amazon Fulfillment Services (1) | 26. YMCA (31) |
| 2. U.S. Department of Defense (8) | 27. University of Richmond (28) |
| 3. VCU Health (2) | 28. Dominion Energy (34) |
| 4. Chesterfield County Public Schools (3) | 29. Truist Financial Corp. (24) |
| 5. Henrico County Public Schools (6) | 30. Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond (27) |
| 6. Bon Secours Richmond Health System (4) | 31. PPD Development (26) |
| 7. HCA Virginia Health System (7) | 32. Lowe's Home Centers (29) |
| 8. Virginia Commonwealth University (5) | 33. Virginia Department of Transportation (32) |
| 9. Walmart (9) | 34. Bank of America (33) |
| 10. Capital One Bank (10) | 35. DuPont Specialty Products (30) |
| 11. Henrico County (11) | 36. Kings Dominion (38) |
| 12. Chesterfield County (12) | 37. CarMax Enterprise Services (38) |
| 13. Richmond City Public Schools (13) | 38. Security Forces (35) |
| 14. City of Richmond (14) | 39. Target Corp. (39) |
| 15. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (15) | 40. Philip Morris USA (41) |
| 16. Food Lion (16) | 41. Insight Global (43) |
| 17. Hanover County School Board (17) | 42. Ensemble RCM (48) |
| 18. United States Postal Service (18) | 43. Hanover County (47) |
| 19. Kroger (19) | 44. Wegmans (new) |
| 20. Dominion Resources (22) | 45. Alliance Group Rock Tenn (46) |
| 21. Capital One (20) | 46. Wawa (42) |
| 22. Publix (25) | 47. Virginia Department of Health (49) |
| 23. MCV Physicians (23) | 48. The Home Depot (45) |
| 24. United Parcel Service (21) | 49. Altria Group (new) |
| 25. CoStar Group (26) | 50. Wells Fargo (44) |

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Economic Information & Analytics

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"Data shows that 70% of all new homebuyers and apartment renters move within the Richmond area, which means the homes we build are for current greater Richmond-area residents. These are move-up buyers. They are our kids, who grew up in the Richmond area and loved it so much that they want to stay here. They are our empty nesters and active adults, who desire to downsize."

—Craig Toalson, CEO of Home Builders Association of Virginia, from the June 2024 issue of Richmond magazine. Toalson was one of six experts interviewed in our annual Real Estate Guide regarding housing stock and affordability.

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Robert Thomas, M.D. will be joining Richmond ENT in 2025. A graduate of Asbury University and Vanderbilt Medical School, he completed ENT residency at the University of Florida in 2012. He then practiced general ENT in Minot, ND for twelve years before deciding to return to warmer climates and family. He is board certified in Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery and is focused on general ENT including caring extensively for pediatric patients as well as embracing newer techniques such as balloon sinuplasty and eustachian tube dilation. He is thrilled to be joining such a wonderful team of patient-centered providers.

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY THE WELL COLLECTIVE; DAN SANWORANART; GETTY IMAGES/RACHEL LEE



- 122 RESEARCH
- 124 HOLISTIC HEALTH
- 126 FITNESS
- 132 POLICY

HEALTH

An Effort for Equity

A PIONEERING CANCER RESEARCH PROJECT TAKES OFF IN THE REGION

BY ALYSSA HUTTON

For decades, cancer research has typically only looked at individual risk factors. Now, thanks to \$9 million in funding from a National Cancer Institute grant, a group of Virginia researchers is hoping to rewrite the script for how the disease is investigated.

This year, a cohort of scientists called Virginia Advancing Cancer Control Equity Research Through Transformative Solutions Center, also known as the VA-ACCERT Center, has begun a five-year-long research project that aims to offer health and cancer prevention services to understudied residents of Virginia's public housing communities.

The collective is a partnership between researchers at Virginia Commonwealth University, VCU Health and Eastern Virginia Medical School at Old Dominion University and federally supported, income-based housing communities throughout the state. VA-ACCERT will focus its research efforts on structural and environmental factors that cause health disparities, rather than indi-

vidual behaviors, according to Jessica LaRose, a co-leader of the project from VCU's School of Public Health.

"We know that many of the cancers that are out there can be prevented. We estimate that 50% of cancer could be prevented if we were able to support changes in cancer risk factors and support changes in increasing screening," says Bernard Fuemmeler, associate director of population sciences at VCU's School of Public Health and one of the cohort's lead researchers.

"The project looks at cancer equity outcomes, such as nutrition quality and physical activity, and targets structural and social drivers such as discrimination, access to health care, food insecurity and health literacy," says Brynn Sheehan, an associate professor and researcher at EVMS-ODU, another VA-ACCERT lead.

Risk factors for cancer include age, diet, tobacco use, hormone levels and alcohol consumption, according to the NCI. A study published in the National Library of Medicine found a significant link between housing inequality and worse cancer

treatment and outcomes. The study, which analyzed more than 31 reports on cancer care and housing dating back to 1984, also found a long-term impact from housing discrimination on patients diagnosed with cancer.

Though the trial will officially launch in the fall, research is already underway in 12 income-based housing communities in the Hampton Roads and greater Richmond areas. This pre-trial period is meant to shape the years-long effort to best support the needs of the studied communities.

A major focus of the partnership is approaching research and advocacy from the bottom up, starting with residents of public housing developments. Those who come from low-income neighborhoods often experience a greater burden when diagnosed with cancer than those from high-income neighborhoods, according to Fuemmeler. The goal is that community members who face health inequities will act as partners with researchers to help broaden their scope.

The researchers will learn about the present health disparities directly from community members and introduce

WELL SITUATED

A health-focused collective broadens its horizons with a new headquarters downtown

BY KAITLIN DAVIS

Certain stories unfold as if written by the universe itself. For The Well Collective, a seemingly divine series of events transformed it from modest origins to remarkable heights.

The journey started in 2013 for Ashley Williams, a Prince George native and founder of the holistic healing and wellness organization. "It was just a moment of my life when I was in a lot of transition, specifically through the loss of a family member, and the transition between college and real life," Williams says. "I found a lot of stress and anxiety, and it really made me get curious about the ways to manage all of those sensations."

Williams says it was during that turbulent time that she found the healing power of yoga. After taking a class at American Family Fitness, her curiosity to pursue wellness as a career was sparked, eventually leading her to a Master of Science in Yoga Therapy.



Above right: Ashley Williams at The Well Collective's new Main St. headquarters; Below left: An instrument used in the collective's sound healing therapy courses



In October of 2015, Williams founded BareSOUL Yoga & Wellness in downtown Richmond, which provided health practices and resources to underserved communities with a focus on social impact. After nearly a decade leading the business, as her self-understanding evolved, so did her vision, leading her to open The Well Collective.

"I think one thing that's really beautiful is the evolution of people," Williams says. "My own self-care journey really allowed me to get clear and aware of who I actually was. The more I understood who I was, the more I understood my purpose and how I wanted to show up in community."

While BareSOUL was established to address health disparities in the Black community, The Well Collective was founded with the focus of restorative community building. Williams conjunctively ran BareSOUL and The

Well Collective until October of 2024, when she dissolved the former to focus her energy on the latter.

Inspired by Richmond's complex history and her interest in diverse healing practices, The Well Collective offers classes and appointments for somatic movement, meditation and massage, as well as workshops on cultural justice and corporate retreats in a space meant to foster connection.

"[Richmond] is at the epicenter of where disconnection and where [the American] economic development system really began," Williams says. "So, if we are the hub of that, we must also be the hub of where healing and the centering of humanity and sustainable relationships are formed."

The Well Collective has been based in Shockoe Slip since 2023, but is in the process of relocating to the historic Branch Building, after Williams acquired the space a year ago. Located

at 1015 E. Main St., this six-story, cast iron-face building will provide Williams with the capacity she needs to broaden her vision for the brand.

"When I saw it pop up on Biz-BuySell, I immediately said, 'I think this is The Well,' and this was before I knew anything about its history," Williams says.

In the mid-20th century, the structure was home to the Branch Company, a brokerage firm that later became Branch, Cabell & Co. For Williams, this history resonates deeply.

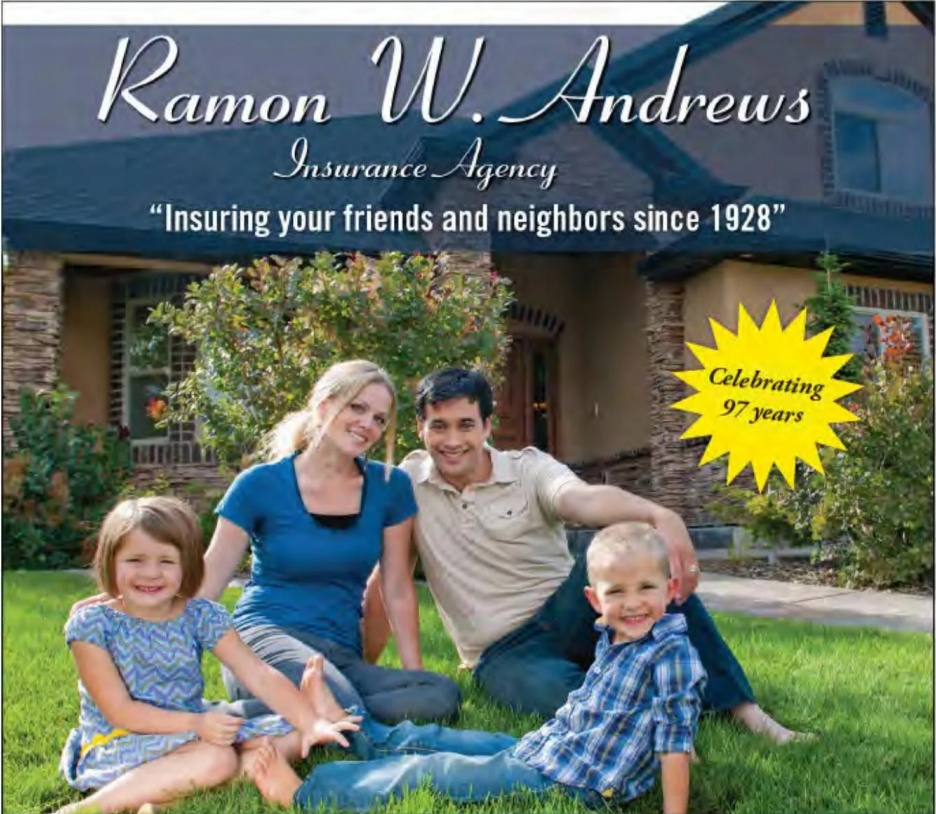
"It was a place that dealt with the commerce of money and valuables, things we value so much in our country, and it can now be transformed into a space that values people," Williams says.

The collective will begin renovations to retrofit the space for their needs in early 2025 and hopes to be hosting programs and events in the spring of 2026. Once renovations are wrapped, the building will be known as The Well Center for Healing and Humanity, hosting the administrative offices of the nonprofit collective.

Through the collective's programs, Williams hopes to build resiliency in members and provide them with tools for navigating life's challenges. The workshops will cover topics such as self-awareness, leadership development and building healthier relationships. In addition to educational offerings, The Well will host art exhibits and storytelling events.

"It's inviting a deeper examination and exploration of what it looks like to be well, and creating a space where people can heal from historical and generational trauma," says Director of Community Engagement and Operation at The Well Collective Kiran Bhagat.

The Well Collective is in the midst of a capital campaign to raise \$10 million for the building project, which will help fund the renovations, programs and operations of The Well Center for Healing and Humanity. ■



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CHASING CONNECTION

Running clubs have sprouted up to unite locals and newcomers through sport **BY KEVIN JOHNSON**

Want to make a friend? Land a date? Make strides in your physical and mental health or earn a gold medal? Join a run club.

From an outside perspective, it's easy to believe in the promise of these clubs. In the last few years, running clubs went from small hobbyist groups with similar goals to massive meetups of longtime and first-time runners alike. Their popularity has been fueled by social media, as posts and videos capture throngs of joyful runners turning trails in scenic locations and making friends along the way.

Data backs up their popularity. In

a 2024 survey, fitness tech company Strava reported a 59% increase in run club participation globally for the year. Driving that increase were runners of all generations, 58% of whom said they made new friends through active groups, while 20% of Gen Z respondents went on a date with someone they met through exercise.

Richmond's running community has embraced these clubs as a catalyst for social interaction and a way to drive traffic to local businesses and institutions. This year, running advocates and local leaders hope to merge the fast-moving fad into part of the city's culture.

JOINING THE PACK

On a Wednesday in December, just after dusk, the members of Capital Run Club arrive at the end of their 3-mile loop about an hour after they began. The group pours into Scott's Addition's Cochiloco, powering down their headlamps and stretching out their ligaments before ordering beer and tacos for a post-run celebration.

Richmond native Jack Oppenheim started the club in May 2024, inspired by the community he had found in run clubs in Los Angeles and Austin. "We're a growing city, so I thought Richmond needed something like this," he says. "I think a lot of young people feel disenfranchised in a lot of ways, and this can be that outlet for connection."

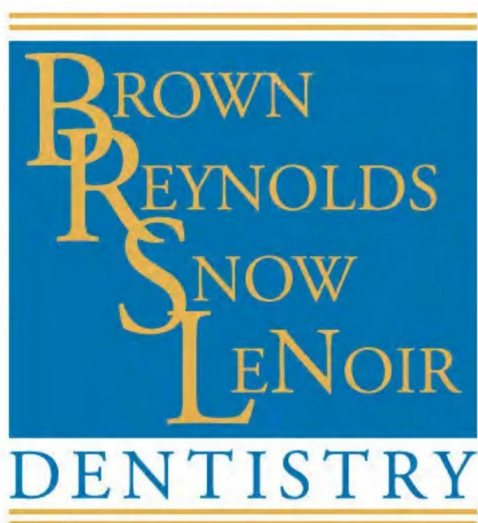
Capital Run Club is one of more than a dozen clubs and community meetups that find time on work nights, early mornings and weekends to log runs around the Richmond region that range from one-mile quickies to longer excursions. Most meet at a restaurant or bar and plan their routes out and back; coffee shops are popular gathering spots in the a.m., while breweries can host the tens or hundreds of runners that turn out to any given event.

804 Run Club grew from a community of runners who frequented the Fan fitness studio Tread Happy. Josh Leidy, a prior coach at the business, helped revive the group when he was training for his first marathon in 2021. The group meets on weekday afternoons April through November at Hardywood Park Craft Brewery on Ownby Lane, where separate cohorts go for one-, three- and five-mile routes in the area, with a focus on accessibility.

"I think running can be intimidating for people, and I think that's a barrier for entry to a lot of folks," Leidy says. "What I think people really have loved about this kind of resurgence and trend of run clubs is, it exposes fitness and movement and running to an entire group of people who never thought it was possible for them." >

Runners from Capital Run Club and Sunrise Social Club on a morning group run

DAN SANWORNART. COURTESY CAPITAL RUN CLUB



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While some training collectives — pace-focused groups that prepare for a race or marathon — have clear goals and benchmarks, run clubs tend to be more inclusive and welcome all paces and abilities, Leidy adds.

“People tell me, ‘Oh I need to get into shape before I go.’ I’m like ‘No.’ There’s not a certain shape that you have to be in,” he says. “We have people there who are training for Boston qualification and someone who’s never run a mile in their life. They’re still there for the same reasons: for movement and joy and to have fun.”

*“[Everyone is] there for the same reasons: for **movement** and **joy** and to **have fun**.”*

JOSH LEIDY, 804 RUN CLUB

Effect Run Club, which hosts three runs a week, meeting at various venues across town, recently expanded their offerings to include a training team for the Richmond marathon and other races across the country. “It is a difficult blend for sure, when it comes to the hype around running right now. Some people want to be social, but also want to be competitive and do better,” says Kleigh Koupal, co-founder of Effect. “With the Effective training team, there’s a space if you do want to be more competitive and within our run club.”

CHANGING THE PACE

Group leaders take their role as community-makers seriously, paying close attention to the benefits an active lifestyle provides while reinforcing the positivity inherent in social

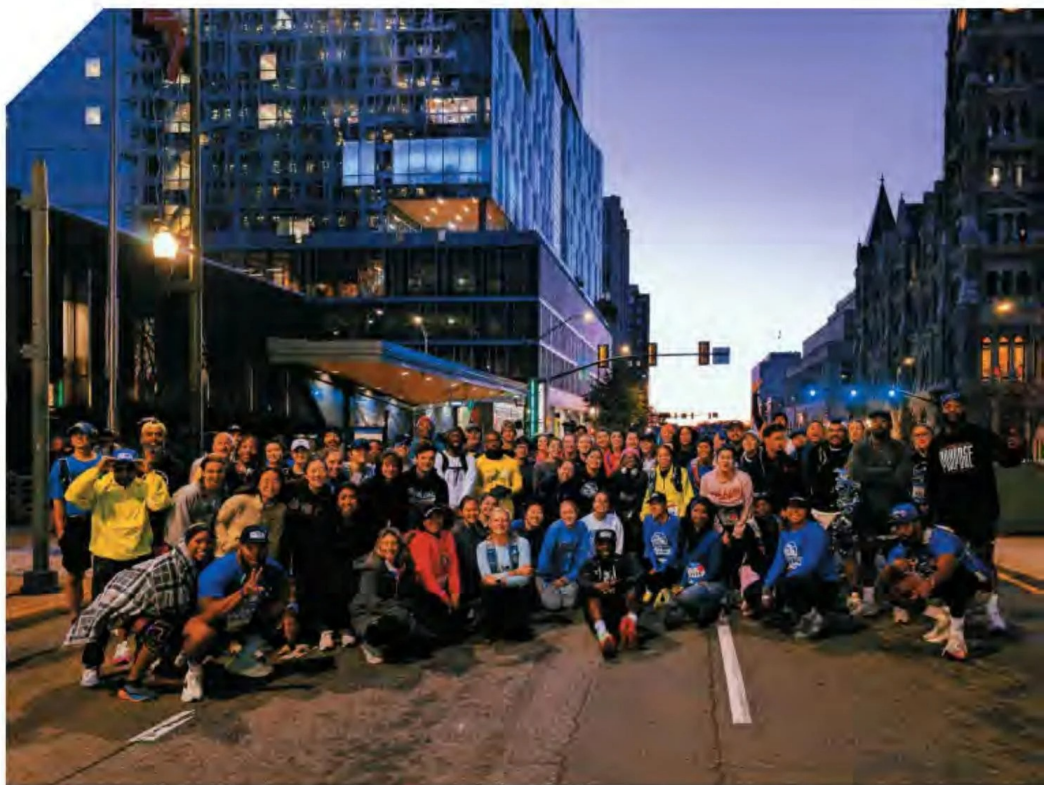
activities to runners. Anthony Clary, founder of We Off The Couch run club, starts runs with a chant of self-affirmation.

“Who you are authentically is what we need here, this is what we say. This is pretty much the opening pitch, a welcome to folks that are new, that are existing members. It’s a welcome to We Off The Couch,” Clary says. “We’re not just out there running miles. We take it very seriously, and we love running. But I think what we learned is [that] we take each other even more seriously.”

Clary started the club and non-profit in 2019 from his personal motivation to control his health. Seeing the impact it had on himself, he encouraged others to get involved. Now, the group is one of the largest clubs in Richmond and had more than 200 runners registered for the 2024 Richmond Marathon.

“We truly remove the barriers to access, because the majority of the folks that we serve are from disenfranchised communities, redlined communities, and when we talk about health impacts on those communities, access is important,” he says.

Members of We Off The Couch run and fitness club on Broad Street downtown



“A lot of folks say running is free, but it is absolutely not free,” he adds. “The decision to be active is free, but is also costly to maintain that activity, depending on where you’re from.”

Clary and fellow leaders assist runners with startup expenses for shoes, running clothes and race entry fees in an effort to make the region’s running culture more equitable.

A LOCAL IMPACT

Running institutions in Richmond have taken notice of run clubs’ popularity and have found ways to foster clubs’ goals while improving the region’s running community.

Richmond Road Runners Club, in operation for nearly 50 years, has acted as a stimulant for making the region active since its founding. The organization helps put on nearly 20 events and races per year, hosts multiple training teams for local races, and provides grants to local running clubs for growth and outreach.

“We have so many members who are part of multiple run groups, but it doesn’t mean that we’re in competition,” says Jenna Conley, RRRC’s executive director. “I think we’re all

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From the left: Dr. Christopher Collie, Dr. Jeffrey Friend, Dr. Patrick Lawrence, Dr. Matthew Pebals



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in support of what's best for the greater Richmond community. We provide programming and scholarships to be a knowledge base for runners and the variety of run clubs."

The nonprofit sports advocate Sports Backers hosts the two largest running events in Richmond: the Monument Avenue 10k in April and the Richmond Marathon in November. Nan Callahan, PR and Communications Manager for the nonprofit, notes that high turnouts for both events in 2024 are related to the popularity of run clubs.

"The increase has been astounding here, and it's been great to have that work in tandem with what we're doing," Callahan says, "They're a great resource to help us further our mission, because all that they're doing goes hand in hand to help with whatever we're doing as well."

Area businesses have also felt the surge: run clubs have flooded businesses like Blanchard's on Broad, Reviresco Coffee and more in the a.m., and breweries, including Bingo Beer Co., The Veil, Final Gravity, Väsen and Hardywood, among others, have become home bases for the clubs.

"It's a great thing for Hardywood, for sure, it does drive business," says Justin Paciocco, Music, Programs, & Festival Coordinator at Hardywood. "I could see us trying to do something similar at our West Creek location as well, because there's such a great running community here."

Supporting runners nourishes the city at large, Conley notes. Going into 2025, that's the motivation for many running clubs to keep moving. "You start to see people invest in themselves in a way they didn't know they could, and then they're



The Ukrop's Monument Avenue 10k in April 2024

giving back to the community by way of donating monetarily or time or whatever it may be, because now they're believing in themselves," says Clary of We Off The Couch. "It's a beautiful thing I'm seeing." ■

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SOMETHING IN THE WATER

Public health experts respond to questions about water fluoridation **BY THARON A. GIDDENS**

The science seems settled. After thousands of studies over the course of decades, it's been shown that the presence of a small amount of fluoride, a mineral added in drinking water (the U.S. Public Health Service currently recommends a level of 0.7 parts per million), inhibits tooth decay.

In 1945, Grand Rapids, Michigan, was the first American city to add fluoride to its city water. Today, 67.1% of Americans have access to fluoridated water. In Virginia, 96% of public water supplies are fluoridated, including Richmond, Henrico and Chesterfield counties.

Adding fluoride to community water supplies is a health recommendation, not a mandate, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, but the practice has drawn criticism almost since its inception. For example, in the 1950s, the John Birch Society called the practice "a massive wedge for

socialized medicine," according to a Nov. 3 report on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered."

"On the whole, there has been very little pushback on water fluoridation; the science supporting it is strong," says Sarah Bedard Holland, CEO of the health advocacy nonprofit Virginia Health Catalyst. The group seeks to promote equitable access for Virginians to comprehensive health care, including dental care. Fluoridation of public water provides universal access to oral health care, she says.

In November, the incoming presidential administration's nominee for health secretary, Robert Kennedy Jr., posted on social media outlet X that, "On January 20th, the Trump White House will advise all water systems to remove fluoride from public water."

Overexposure to fluoride can lead to brown staining of the enamel, known as mottling, according to the CDC. In the social media post, Kennedy claimed that the mineral is an indus-

According to the Virginia Department of Health, over 96% of all Virginians connected to public water systems receive fluoridated water.

trial waste and said it was associated with ailments ranging from arthritis to thyroid diseases.

Virginia Health Catalyst's Holland sees the anti-fluoridation voices gaining public attention as a sign of water fluoridation's impact and safety. "[In] some ways, because of its quiet effectiveness, it has fallen off most people's radar screens," she says. "I think we have an opportunity now, since fluoride is getting attention, to laud its successes and revisit its purpose, effectiveness and necessity."

"I think we have an opportunity now, since fluoride is getting attention, to laud its successes and revisit its purpose, effectiveness and necessity."

SARAH BEDARD HOLLAND,
VIRGINIA HEALTH CATALYST

To that end, she shares in an email, the nonprofit will continue to offer evidence-based information about fluoridation and other oral health practices.

In a letter sent Nov. 15 to friends of Virginia Health Catalyst, she noted that fluoridation has been shown to reduce the rate of cavities in adults and children by 25%.

The letter also noted that water fluoridated at levels two or three times the optimal amount has been asso-





ciated with joint pain and nausea. At even higher rates of consumption, it has been associated with lower IQ in children, according to a systematic review of research by the National Toxicology Program.

Studies in the U.S., she writes, show no risk of high fluoride exposure from municipal systems. "As with any substance, dose matters, and the fluoride levels used in U.S. water systems are well within the range deemed safe by health authorities," she writes.

Tegwyn Brickhouse, a professor of pediatric dentistry for the VCU School of Dentistry and a board member of Virginia Health Catalyst, says water fluoridation is a safe and effective public health measure. "Community water fluoridation is

Mayor Danny Avula, former director of the Richmond and Henrico Health Districts

one practical way to help everyone — especially those facing barriers to care — avoid unnecessary suffering and expenses," she says.

"Untreated oral health problems don't just cause pain — they can make it harder for children to learn, keep adults from working, and, over time, lead to serious health complications. Meanwhile, too many Virginians don't have regular access to a dentist or the necessary resources to maintain strong, healthy teeth."

Richmond Mayor Danny Avula says the city needs to be aware of any changes in federal policies, but Richmond public welfare needs to drive any decision. "The call for local leaders is to protect and support healing and thriving in our community, and that means really looking out for the best interests of people here in Richmond," Avula says. "[We] control the water supply, and so we do have local decision making, authority and autonomy around things like that." ■



ABOUT FLUORIDE

The mineral fluoride combines with outer enamel layers on teeth, hardening the enamel, which makes teeth less susceptible to decay. Fluoride is present in most water. Many public water supplies add fluoride to ensure recommended therapeutic levels. The presence of fluoride at optimal levels reduces the occurrence of cavities by 25% in adults and children.



FLUORIDE IN METRO RICHMOND WATER

Chesterfield County

0.78

Fluoride parts per million

Henrico County

0.70

Fluoride parts per million

Richmond City water

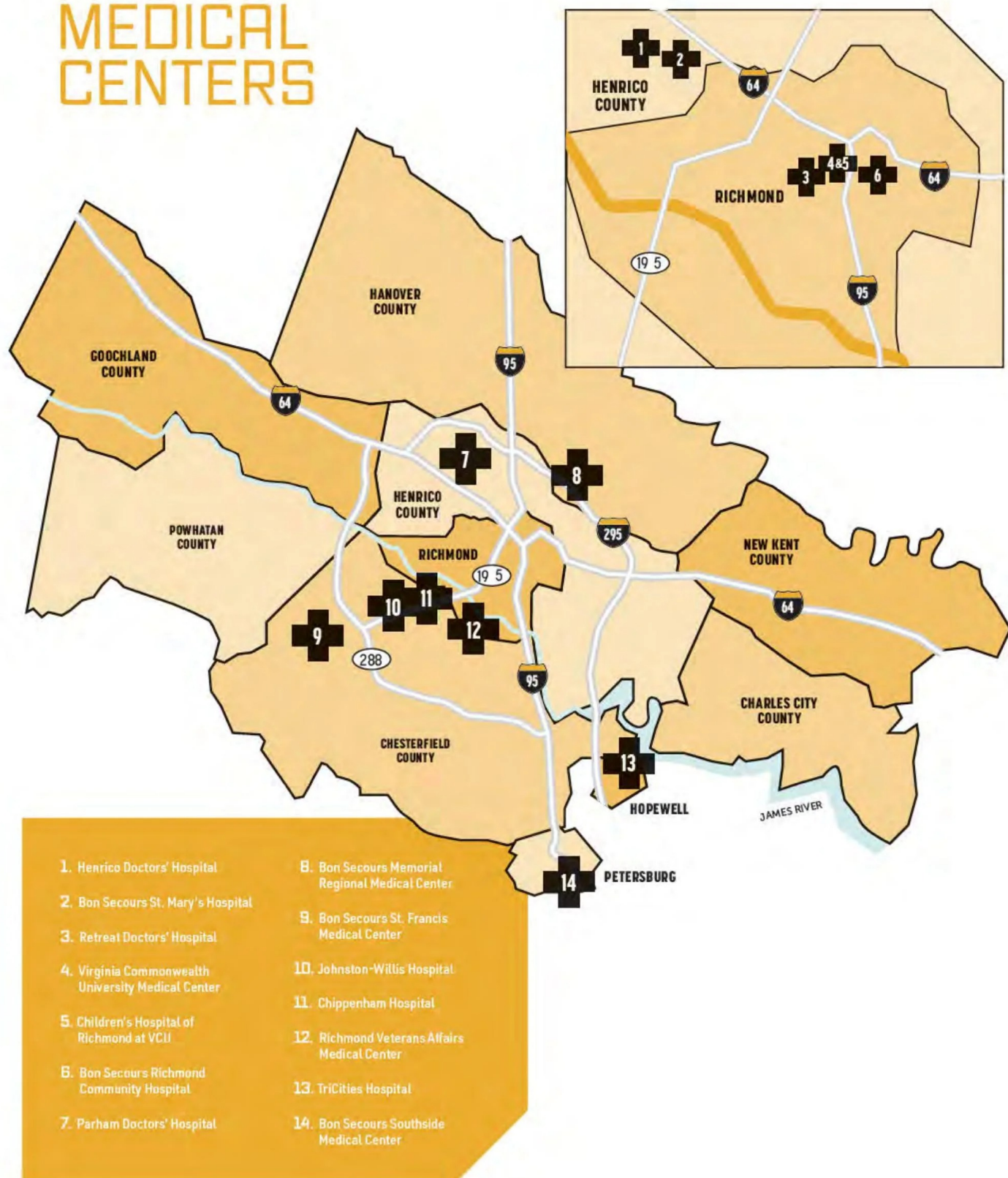
0.60

Fluoride parts per million

You can find information on fluoride levels in water systems at cdc.gov/fluoridation

Sources: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes of Health, Virginia Health Catalyst, City of Richmond, Chesterfield County, Henrico County

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Bon Secours Richmond Community Hospital 1500 N. 28th St., 804-225-1700 or bonsecours.com	✗	✗	✗	✗	PCU	✓	104 beds, 40 behavioral health unit beds	✗	✓	✓ inpatient wound care	✓	✗
Bon Secours St. Francis Medical Center 13710 St. Francis Blvd., 804-594-7300 or bonsecours.com	✓	✓	✗	✓	ICU, NICU	✓	130 beds	✓	✓	✓ outpatient wound unit and inpatient wound care	✓	✗
Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital 5801 Brema Road, 804-285-2011 or bonsecours.com	✓	✓	✗	✓	CCU, CVICU, PICU, ICU, NICU, IMCU, CVSU, NSTU	✓	391 beds, 32 behavioral health unit beds	✓	✓	✓ outpatient wound unit and inpatient wound services	✓	✗
Bon Secours Southside Medical Center 200 Medical Park Blvd., Petersburg, 804-765-5000 or bonsecours.com	✓	✓	✗	✗	CVICU, NICU, ICU, PCU	✓	300 beds, 31 behavioral health unit beds	✓	✓	✓ outpatient wound unit and inpatient wound care	✓	III
Children's Hospital of Richmond at VCU 1000 E. Broad St., 804-828-CHOR or chrichmond.org	✗	✓	✓	✓	NICU, PICU	✓	included in VCU Medical Center count	✗	✓	✓	✓	pediatric I
Chippenham Hospital 7101 Jahnke Road, 804-483-0000 or chippenhammed.com	✓	✓	✗	✗ [†]	BICU, PICU, PCU, CVICU, CCU, MSTICU	✓	466 rooms, 137 inpatient behavioral health beds	✓	✗ oncology services available	✓	✓	I
Henrico Doctors' Hospital 1602 Skipwith Road, 804-289-4500 or henricodoctors.com	✓	✓	✓	✗ [†]	CICU, SICU, NICU	✓	340 beds, 298 private rooms	✓	✓	✗	✓	II
Johnston-Willis Hospital 1401 Johnston Willis Drive, 804-483-5000 or johnstonwillismed.com	✓	✗	✗	✗ [†]	NICU, NSICU, MSICU	✓	292 private rooms	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Parham Doctors' Hospital 7700 E. Parham Road, 804-747-5600 or parhamdoctors.com	✗	✗	✗	✗ [†]	CCU	✓	200 private rooms, 24 be- havioral health unit beds, 36 rehab beds	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Retreat Doctors' Hospital 2621 Grove Ave., 804-254-5100 or retreatdoctors.com	✗	✗	✗	✗ [†]	CCU, ICU	✓	226 private rooms, 20 inpatient be- havioral health unit beds	✗	✗	✓ wound unit	✓	✗
Richmond Veterans Affairs Medical Center 1201 Broad Rock Blvd., 804-675-5000 or richmond.va.gov	✗	✓	✓	✓	MICU, SICU, CCU	✓	382 beds	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗
TriCities Hospital 411 W. Randolph Road, Hopewell, 804-541-1600 or tricitiehospital.com	✗	✗	✗	✗ [†]	ICU	✓	147 beds, 40 behavioral health beds	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
VCU Health/VCU Medical Center 1250 E. Marshall St., 804-828-9000 or vcuhealth.org	✓	✓	✓	✓	CICU, CSICU, ICU, MICU, MRICU, NICU, NSICU, PICU, STICU	✓	837 beds	✓	✓	✓	✓	I

* Has family-practice pharmacy, nursing and radiology residence programs † Provides research via clinical trials

ICU ABBREVIATIONS: BICU: Behavioral; CCU/CSICU: Coronary/Cardiac Surgery; CICU: Cardiac; CVICU: Cardiovascular; CVSU: Cardiovascular Services Unit; ICU: Intensive Care Unit; IMCU: Intermediate Care Unit; IVCU: Interventional Cardiac Unit; MIICU: Medical Intermediate ICU; MICU: Medical; MRICU: Medical Respiratory; MSICU: Medical Surgical; NICU: Neonatal; NSICU: Neuroscience; NSTU: Neuroscience Telemetry Unit; PCU: Progressive Care; PICU: Pediatric; RICU: Renal; SICU: Surgical; STICU: Surgical Trauma

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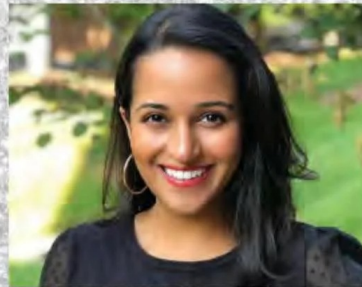
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DEBBIE DUNCAN; COURTESY BRIGHTPOINT COMMUNITY COLLEGE



- 142 INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
- 148 TECHNOLOGY
- 150 PUBLIC EDUCATION
- 154 HIGHER ED
- 160 COMMUNITY COLLEGES

EDUCATION

Breaking the Mold

FOUR LOCAL
INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS
FORGE THEIR
OWN PATHWAYS
IN TEACHING
CHILDREN

BY PAULA PETERS
CHAMBERS

It's a cliché, and it's also true: Children really are the future. Every generation has a chance to make its mark, but at some point, the next generation will advance with new philosophies, concerns and approaches.

So how do we prepare our children for their time as leaders? We checked in with four local independent schools to see how they approach a monumental task.

LYNNHAVEN SCHOOL

Lynnhaven School opened in 2012 with a mission of education centered on an acronym: PBL. While the uninitiated might equate PBL with project-based learning, there's more to it than that.

"We talk about PBL being person-based learning, problem-based learning and project-based learning," says Head of School Casey Hitchcock. "This is not a one-size-fits-all model, because that rarely works. But because of the environment here, many people can thrive here."

Over the years, Lynnhaven has offered both middle school and high school classes. Now, the school is focused on grades 9 through 12.

"It's made a big difference for our students and our teachers," Hitchcock says. "We go through iterations, which is what we want our students to go through within themselves. Being small means we are able to make adjustments in real time. Our ship is not a cruise ship; we can change the sails if we need to."

Lynnhaven also wants to go

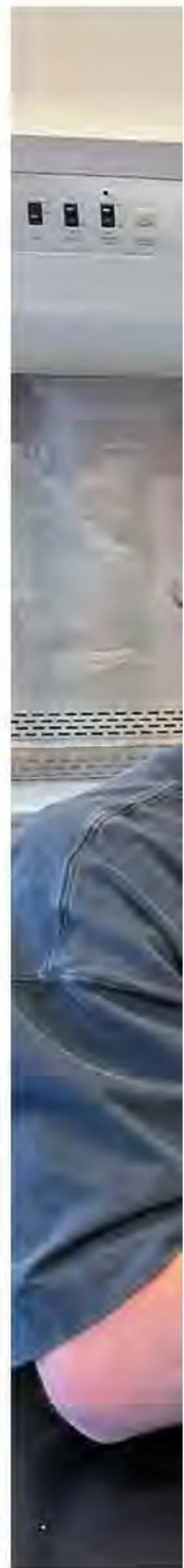
beyond standard course options. "We teach forensic science and microbiology and environmental science — sciences that are relevant to the world our students are going into," she says.

The school requires students to take algebra — "not necessarily because our kids will be solving problems, but because of the way it teaches you to think," Hitchcock says — and statistics. "We want them to take [statistics] before college," she says. "They will be given research articles with data and need to know how to interpret them."

No Advanced Placement courses are offered at Lynnhaven, but students may take college classes at Reynolds Community College and online through Marymount University and Arizona State University. College counseling begins at the end of ninth grade. While the school's website touts its 100% college acceptance rate, Hitchcock says college isn't the only goal.

"Our aim is to give [each] child the room to think critically, to be curious, to understand that they, in order to participate as a citizen, have to evolve and change and grow, and be OK with that," Hitchcock says. "That's inherently an uncomfortable process, and it's easy to dig your heels in. But if that's your mentality, then you'll get left behind. If something new comes in, I want you to be able to figure it out. Those are future-ready skills. Teaching you [to code] is probably not a future-ready skill anymore. [Artificial intelligence] can do that faster." >

RIVER CHAMBERS





Lynnhaven School
is a private non-
profit in northern
Henrico County.

GOOD SHEPHERD EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

Good Shepherd Episcopal School believes in the power of community and belonging.

"Children have to feel welcomed and loved unconditionally, to be allowed to be who they are," says Lori Jobe, interim head of school. "You have to be comfortable in your own skin to appreciate differences in others."

The school, founded by Good Shepherd Episcopal Church in 1971, now operates separately from the church. Chapel is held every other Wednesday, and students in grades four through eight also study religion and world cultures, although students need not be Episcopal, Christian or follow any religion. "Our curriculum teaches the Bible as an academic subject, through a historical lens," Jobe says. "We also want to expose students to other religious traditions."

Good Shepherd has students in kindergarten through eighth grade and, in 2021, it opened the Nature Preschool for 3- to 6-year-olds. The school takes advantage of its location just a few blocks away from Forest Hill Park for hands-on learning. All grade-school students spend at least one 90-minute class period in the park weekly, and preschool students travel to the park every day, prevented only by the most inclement weather.

This year, for the first time, everyone in the school read — or had read to them — the book "Wishtree" by Katherine Applegate, which has a 216-year-old oak tree as a central character. In addition to discussing the book's themes of inclusion and acceptance, everyone in the school has been grouped into "tree families" (dogwood, maple, oak, pine or willow) with students learning more about their family trees while on scavenger hunts in the park.

Community spirit at GSES is intentional and broad, Jobe notes.



"We hope our families fully believe in our mission and philosophy, but we don't require them to fit into a specified culture," she says. "Our goal is to build a community with diverse people who believe in our school's endless possibilities."

Middle schoolers move on to a variety of high schools, such as Appomattox Regional and Maggie L. Walker governor's schools; Collegiate, Trinity Episcopal and The Steward schools; and CodeRVA.

"Of course we want to prepare [students] academically, and I think we do that," Jobe says. "We also want them to listen to what their calling might be, to have a feeling of belonging

Middle schoolers at Good Shepherd Episcopal School participate in its Outdoor Education program.

and of being seen and heard. We want to prepare them to be good, kind humans [who know how to] effect change in their community and in the world."

SEVEN HILLS SCHOOL

Walking past a classroom at Seven Hills School, you might see a student leaning back in his chair, feet on the table, another taking notes at a standing desk and yet another walking in slow loops with a fidget spinner in his hand. All are middle school boys, and all are engaged.

"So often, the first question we get is, 'Are they troubled?' No, they're not," says Dagan Rowe, Seven Hills' >

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head of school. “They’re bright and active. We have room to give them to move. We always ask, ‘Is the thing they’re doing disruptive to themselves or others?’ If either answer is yes, then we deal with it. If the answer is no, then we’re fine.”

Founded in 2001, Seven Hills’ total population is fewer than 100 students, which includes a “bridge” class of fifth graders. These years are a time of tremendous change, note Rowe and Assistant Head of School Will Murphy. “We are focused on middle school boys and where they are,” Rowe says, “being cognizant of their needs and skill-building over time.”

“We offer a safety net,” Murphy says. “We want to make sure [boys are] in a place where we can help them learn how to handle conflict resolution, where they can jump from one sport to another without judgment. We try not to ascribe characteristics to a kid, because he’s going to change.”

Of the school’s 15 teachers, 13 are men, and they engage with students in the classroom and beyond. Seven Hills is known for its monthly excursions to the James River and also taking advantage of its acreage north of Virginia Union University to have daily outdoor recreation, where students can throw or bounce balls, nibble from garden plants, or enjoy a



Left:
Seven Hills
Schools are
split into
houses akin
to those in
“Harry
Potter.”
Right:
Elementary
student at
St. Andrew’s
School

book under a tree. When the weather is foul, a nearby shed offers table tennis, foosball and air hockey. Teachers often join in, which fosters healthy relationships.

While the school hasn’t ruled out expanding — someday — into high school grades, administrators hear from alumni and parents that its focus on the middle school years is working. “They’re ready to go to high school,” Rowe says. “We’ve equipped them with skills by building scaffolding around them to support them and then taking that scaffolding down slowly.”

Murphy adds, “It’s a gradual release of responsibility, which allows them to further stake their claim that they are the protagonists of their own learning.”

ST. ANDREW’S SCHOOL

Founded 130 years ago by Richmond philanthropist Grace Arents, St. Andrew’s School continues to live its mission of providing a free education for children that speaks to the whole child.

“Our mission, as it’s written, is to end the cycle of poverty by creating access to opportunities,” says Hannah Barr, acting head of school. “We want to think about what it means to be successful, how to help children identify their emotions, how to give them the tools to advocate for themselves so others can listen.”

St. Andrew’s has just under 100 students enrolled in kindergarten through fifth grade. Families whose gross annual income does not exceed 200% of the federal poverty guidelines may apply to have their children attend; every student receives a scholarship covering the full cost of tuition.

Small classroom sizes encourage relationships between students and teachers, who follow a “warm demander” approach to help students see their own potential. “We want to show and model the ways in which by holding high expectations, kids will meet those expectations,” Barr says.



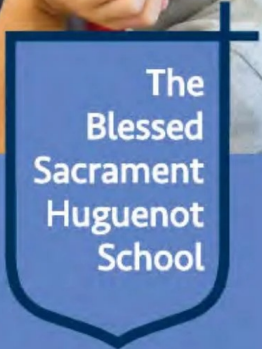
“It’s about being comfortable naming opportunities where there’s room [for the student] to grow.”

Seeking to make up ground lost during the COVID-19 pandemic, the school is now teaching reading through multigrade cohorts that meet four times a week. Students are grouped according to their reading levels, not their ages, with no more than six students to a teacher.

Every faculty member in the building now teaches reading, including the physical education teacher. “[That teacher] thought I was crazy, but if you can read, you can teach reading,” Barr says. “Even if the only thing that changes is that kids learn to like reading, it’s worth it.”

Shelley Thompson, the school’s director of development, notes that the partnership between school and home is critical. “We are trying to make sure we recognize that a lot of our parents chose us because of maybe their own trauma that they experienced in public schools,” she says. “We try to show them the love and care we show students, because they are truly partners in their kids’ education.”

“Love is one of our values,” Barr adds. “We show love by saying, ‘I believe in you and will hold you accountable; to do otherwise is to indicate that I think you’re less than capable.’ That’s not what we believe.” ■



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LEARNING BALANCE

Embracing – and regulating – technology in public schools **BY HOLLY RODRIGUEZ**

The intersection of education and technology has become increasingly complex as students, parents and administrators grapple with issues such as safety, students' health and best practices for learning. As administrators in Chesterfield County Public Schools, Henrico County Public Schools and Richmond Public Schools consider how to create the best learning environments for their students and teachers, they say cellphone use, artificial intelligence and communications are the chief concerns driving their technology policies.

All the school districts had policies addressing cellphone usage before Gov. Glenn Youngkin released Exec-

utive Order Number 33, "Establishing Cell Phone-Free Education to Promote the Health & Safety of Virginia's K-12 Students," last July. Noting the negative effects of social media use on children's mental health, declining test results, and "a cumulative, lasting and detrimental impact on adolescents' ability to focus and engage in their studies," the order required Virginia school districts to establish cellphone-free education. Policy updates in accordance with the executive order went into effect this month.

Regional school divisions now require that students turn off phones and other internet-enabled devices, such as smartwatches, during the school day and stow them out of sight

in backpacks or secure pouches. Students who violate the rules risk having their device confiscated; in some cases, their parents or guardian will have to retrieve the device from the administration. Chesterfield and Richmond public schools both require that phones be stowed "bell to bell," including between classes and during lunch, while Henrico allows middle and high school students to use devices at those times.

With cellphone policies in place to keep students more focused in the classroom, learning new technology is constantly on the horizon as tools for instruction and communication evolve. Adoption of advanced technology is necessary, says HCPS spokesperson

Ken Blackstone, to equip students for high standards of learning. "We aim to stay ahead of the curve by integrating the latest technological advancements that can significantly improve the educational experience," he says. "And these tools help us address specific challenges, such as student safety, cybersecurity and personalized learning, ensuring that we meet the diverse needs of our student population."

Laptop computer distribution for student use at school and home has been standard for years across all three school districts. Websites such as YouTube and Google are regularly used for instruction and study. Digital learning platforms like Clever, used by RPS and HCPS, enable teachers to store online instruction materials for distribution to students. Schoology, a learning platform used by HCPS, provides students with a place to complete and turn in assignments electronically and enables parents to keep track of student assignments, progress and grades. CCPS students use CCPSOnline to choose high school credit courses taught by licensed CCPS teachers through Canvas, an online learning management system.

Recently, the school districts have started incorporating artificial intelligence into classroom instruction and student safety measures. "How to safely and positively leverage AI in the classrooms for learning is something that we have our eyes on," says Alyssa Schwenk, a spokesperson for RPS, "and teachers may be using features in ChatGPT, Adobe Express and Quizzizz to support lesson planning and assessments." RPS' new strategic plan prioritizes developing a task force to determine how AI can be used further in classrooms.

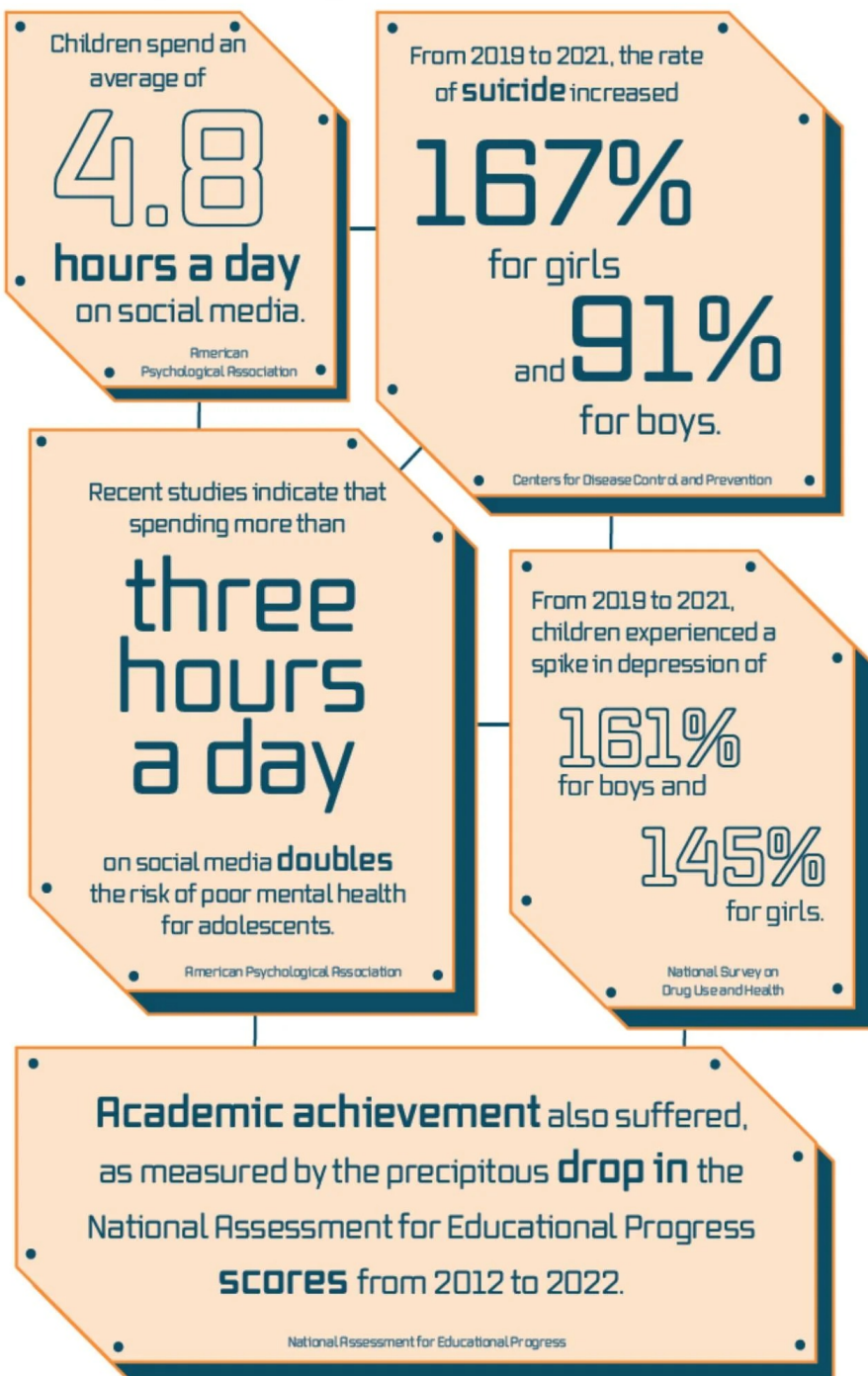
Blackstone says Henrico schools are turning to AI to protect students in digital spaces by using it to analyze students' online activity. They are also looking into "generative AI for learning and enhancing community engagement," he says.

Beyond the classroom, communication with parents also has been affected by technology.

Gone are the days when parents received a printed newsletter informing them of school news or their student's progress; even checking a website is outdated. CCPS uses Apptegy, an application to communicate with parents through phone,

email, text messages and social media sites. RPS and HCPS both use an app called Remind, which offers centralized messaging with automated translation, chat between teachers and families, voice and video calls, and even digital paperwork.

As technology evolves, K-12 public education is in step with preparing students for tomorrow. ■



PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE

International Baccalaureate diplomas, elite governor's schools and special-interest tracks prepare students for top colleges and competitive careers **BY LAURA ANDERS LEE**

Governor's Schools

Gov. Linwood Holton founded the Virginia Governor's School program in 1973 for students who excel in academics and the arts. Funded by the General Assembly, governor's schools are known for small-group instruction, hands-on experiences and demanding academics. Of the state's 40 programs, two year-round options are located in the Richmond region. Each year, 1,200 incoming freshmen compete for just 190 spots at Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government and International Studies. Students may also apply to Appomattox Regional Governor's School for the Arts and Technology in Petersburg, which has an enrollment of 385.

CodeRVA Regional High School

This public magnet high school in Richmond opened in 2017. With 345 students from around the region, the innovative program offers advanced computer science and coding curriculum as well as high-tech internships at local businesses.

Specialty Centers

Students in Henrico and Chesterfield counties may attend their home schools or apply to specialty centers located within high schools around their districts. Each specialty center has a particular focus: engineering, environmental science, technology, health science, business, communication, education, leadership, art and many more.

Today, 2,600 qualifying students are enrolled at 15 Henrico County specialty centers and 2,200 are enrolled at 13 Chesterfield County centers.

Selective Admissions

Richmond Public Schools oversees



three selective admissions schools. Founded in 1972, Open High School offers Advanced Placement classes and dual enrollment for 175 students. Richmond Community High School was founded in 1977 for gifted students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. More than 60% of its 200 spots are allocated for financially disadvantaged students. Franklin Military Academy develops leadership, promotes scholarship and encourages citizenship in a military structure, while offering foreign languages, the arts and AP classes. More than 330 middle and high school students are enrolled.

IB Programs

Students complete a rigorous curriculum focusing on critical thinking and cultural awareness to earn their

A "living building" at Wilton Farm will be part of the Center for Environmental Studies and Sustainability at Varina High School.

international baccalaureate diplomas. Programs are offered at Midlothian and Meadowbrook high schools in Chesterfield County, Thomas Jefferson High School in Richmond, and Henrico and Tucker high schools in Henrico County.

What's Ahead

Next year, a new \$16 million facility will house the Center for Environmental Studies and Sustainability at Varina High School, making it the world's first public school with a certified "Living Building Challenge" facility.

The new Richmond High School for the Arts will open in fall 2026. The \$145 million facility will be a showcase for visual, performing and digital arts. RPS is also unveiling themed-based programs, similar to those offered at a specialty center. ■



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PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN THE RICHMOND REGION

This is a sampling of private schools in the Richmond region. Information for this chart was provided by the schools.

For the latest tuition information or to learn more, contact the schools' admissions offices.

Name/ address/ phone	Type	Established	Enrollment/ Grades taught	Dress code	Tuition	After-school program	Student- teacher ratio
Academy of Academic Excellence 12345 Gayton Road, 804-740-6500	Coed	1997	60/PK-5	uniforms	\$18,400	✓	10:1
Al Madina School 10700 Academy Drive, 804-330-4888	Islamic	2016	123/PK-12	uniforms	\$6,000-\$7,350	✗	7:1
All Saints Catholic School 3418 Noble Ave., 804-329-7524	Coed Catholic	1982	200/JK-8	uniforms	\$8,600	✓	20:1
Anna Julia Cooper Episcopal School 2100 N. 29th St., 804-822-6610	Coed independent	2009	197/K-8	uniforms	All students on scholarship	✗	13:1
Banner Christian School 5831 Courthouse Road, 804-276-5200	Coed Christian	2002	238/K-12	uniforms	\$11,200-\$11,975	day care	10:1
Benedictine College Preparatory 12829 River Road, 804-708-9500	Boys Catholic	1911	300/9-12	uniforms	\$24,900	✓ and before school	12:1
Blessed Sacrament Huguenot 2501 Academy Road, Powhatan, 804-598-4211	Coed Catholic	1998	507/PS-12	uniforms	\$5,500-\$17,150	✓	10:1
Cardinal Newman Academy 11000 Smoketree Drive, North Chesterfield, 804-464-3575	Coed college prep	2017	22/9-12	✓	\$9,250	✓ sports	3:1
Carmel School 9020 Jericho Road, Ruther Glen, 804-448-3288	Coed, college prep, Christian	1986	250/PK-12	✓	\$8,950-\$11,280	✓	12:1
Central Montessori School 323 N. 20th St., 804-447-7493	Montessori, day	2007	300/3 months-middle school	✗	\$1,550-\$2,000 per month (depending on program)	✓ all day program-school runs 8am-5pm	3:1 to 18:1
Collegiate School 103 N. Mooreland Road, 804-740-7077	Coed college prep	1915	1,690/JK-12	✓	\$19,560-\$32,820	✓	8:1
Cristo Rey Richmond High School 304 N. Sheppard St., 804-447-4704	Coed Catholic	2019	240/9-12	uniforms	\$200 per month	✓ and before school	14:1
Educational Development Center 3001 Fifth Ave., 804-228-2600	Therapeutic day/special education	1992	45 to 60/ K-12	uniforms	Contact school	✗	varies
Elijah House Academy 6627-B Jahnke Road, 804-755-7051	Coed Christian	1989	200/PK-8	uniforms	Based on income	✗ sports programs only	15:1
Ephesus Junior Academy 3700 Midlothian Turnpike, 804-233-4582	Seventh-day Adventist	1956	26/K-8	uniforms	\$4,500-\$4,600	✓	15:1
Faith Life Academy 420 Oranoco Ave., 804-321-1333	Coed Christian	1991	10/PK-K	uniforms	\$157 per week	✓	10:1
Good Shepherd Episcopal School 4207 Forest Hill Ave., 804-231-1452	Coed Episcopal, day	1971	141/K-8	uniforms on chapel days	PK variable, K-8: \$15,000	✓	10:1
Grace Christian School 8067 Atlee Road, Mechanicsville, 830-730-7300	Coed Christian	2013	350/6-12	uniforms	6-8: \$7,800, 9-12: \$8,820	✓	18:1
Grafton Integrated Health Network 4100 Price Club Blvd., Midlothian, 804-674-8888	Special education and group homes	1989	72/K-12	✗	Contact school	✓	6:1
Grove Christian School 8701 Ridge Road, 804-741-2860	Coed Christian	1978	500/PK-12	uniforms	\$3,800-\$8,900	✓	11:1
Guardian Christian Academy 6851 Courthouse Road, 804-715-3210	Christian	1975	396/PK-12	✓	\$10,750-\$11,050	✓ and before school	18:1
Hanover Academy 117 Frances Road, Ashland, 804-798-8413	Coed	1959	90/PK-8	✓	n/p	✓ and before school	10:1
Harambee Day School at Elk Hill 1975 Elk Hill Road, Goochland, 804-457-4866	Coed for mental and behavioral health	1992	30/6-12	uniforms	Contact school	✗	4:1
Hunter Classical Christian School 635 Manakin Road, Manakin-Sabot, 804-708-0048	Coed classical Christian	2010	148/K-8	uniforms	\$10,800-\$12,000	✗	12:1
John G. Wood School 8716 W. Broad St., 804-270-6566	Coed for trauma survivors/ learning disabled	1974	32/K-12	✗	\$150 per year	✗	4:1
Landmark Christian School 4000 Creighton Road, 804-644-5550	Coed Christian	1966	115/K-12	✓	\$6,000 per year	✓	12:1
Lynnhaven School 1538 E. Parham Road, Henrico, 804-750-2300	Coed college prep	2012	49/9-12	✓	\$22,500	✗	6:1
Millwood School 15100 Millwood School Lane, 804-639-3200	Independent coed college prep	1989	265/PK-12	✓	\$15,950-\$19,200	✓ and before school	12:1

Name/ address/ phone	Type	Established	Enrollment/ grades taught	Dress code	Tuition	After-school program	Student- teacher ratio
Northstar Academy & Career Center 11501 Nuckols Road, 804-747-1003	Nontraditional learners, students with disabilities	1996	120/K-12	✓	varies	✗	8:1
Orchard House School 500 N. Allen Ave., 804-228-2436	Girls	1998	80/5-8	✗	\$24,500	✓	10:1
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School 8250 Woodman Road, 804-262-1770	Coed Catholic	1963	357/JK-8	uniforms	\$8,810 (Catholic) \$11,445 (non-Catholic)	✓ and before school	18:1
Providence Montessori Christian School 1200 Wilmington Ave., 804-584-6390	Coed Montessori	2009	15/ ages 2-5	✓	\$3,750-\$5,750	✓ until 5 p.m.	8:1
Redeemer Episcopal Day School 2341 Winterfield Road, 804-378-8909	Coed Episcopal	2020	100/JK-5	✗	\$10,530	✗	18:1
Richmond Academy 12285 Patterson Ave., 804-784-0036	Coed Christian	1911	135/PK-12	uniforms	\$6,700-\$8,700	✓	15:1
Richmond Christian School 6511 Belmont Road, 804-276-3193	Coed Christian	1950	306/K-12	✓	\$7,470-\$9,500	✓ and before school	15:1
Richmond Montessori School 499 N. Parham Road, 804-741-0040	Coed Montessori	1965	316/18 months- 8th grade	✗	\$12,950-\$26,165	✓	5:1 toddlers, 10-13:1 others
Richmond Waldorf School 1301 Robin Hood Road, 804-377-8024	Waldorf	1996	200/PK-8	✓	\$7,750-\$18,035	✓	8:1 early childhood, 15-16:1 grade school
Riverside School 2110 McRae Road, Bon Air, 804-320-3465	Coed for students with dyslexia	1974	93/K-8	✓	\$34,120	✓ sports and activities	1:1 reading, 9:1 classroom
Rudlin Torah Academy 3809 Patterson Ave., 804-353-1110	Coed Hebrew day school	1966	97/K-8	✓	\$9,235-\$11,679	✓	10:1
Sabot School 3400 Stony Point Road, 804-272-1341	Coed, Reggio-inspired	2007	200/PK-8	✗	\$13,500-\$20,995	✓	7:1
Saint Bridget School 6011 York Road, 804-288-1994	Coed Catholic	1952	520/JK-8	uniforms	\$6,800-\$16,500	✓	17:1
Saint Gertrude High School 12829 River Road, 804-358-9114	Girls Catholic college prep	1922	244/9-12	uniforms	\$24,900	✗	7:1
Saint Joseph Catholic School 123 Franklin St., Petersburg, 804-732-3931	Coed Catholic	1876	166/JK-8	uniforms	\$7,522-\$8,522	✓	10:1
Salem Christian School 35 Church Lane, Gum Spring, 804-556-6070	Coed Christian	1996	93/PK-12	✓	\$3,000-\$7,650	✓ and before school	7:1
Seven Hills School 1311 Overbrook Road, 804-329-6300	Boys	2001	96/5-8	✗	\$24,980	✓ sports and clubs	6:1
Spiritos School 400 Coalfield Road, 804-897-7440	Early intervention focus on autism, developmental delay	2002	10/PK-8	✗	Contact school	✗	1:1
St. Andrew's School 227 S. Cherry St., 804-648-4545	Coed Episcopal	1894	96/K-5	uniforms	All students receive 100% scholarship	✗	16:1
St. Benedict Catholic School 3100 Grove Ave., 804-254-8850	Coed Catholic	1919	225/JK-8	uniforms	\$7,354-\$10,572	✓ and before school	16:1
St. Catherine's School 6001 Grove Ave., 804-288-2804	Episcopal girls	1890	945/toddler-12	✓	\$18,650-\$31,980	✓	varies
St. Christopher's School 711 St. Christopher's Road, 804-282-3185	Episcopal boys	1911	1,002/JK-12	✓	\$19,750-\$32,200	✓ coed	5:1
St. Edward Epiphany 10701 W. Huguenot Road, 804-272-2881	Coed Catholic	1961	480/PK-8	uniforms	\$6,850-\$12,015	✓ and before school	20:1
St. Mary's Catholic School 9501 Gayton Road, 804-740-1048	Coed Catholic	1965	410/JK-8	uniforms	\$10,410	✓	8:1
St. Michael's Episcopal School 10510 Hobby Hill Road, 804-272-3514	Coed Episcopal	1957	394/K-8	✓	\$14,650-\$16,035	✓ and before school	10:1
The Faison Center 1701 Byrd Ave., 804-612-1947	Autism and other developmental disabilities	1999	193/19 months - 22 years	✗	Contact school	✓	7:1
The New Community School 4211 Hermitage Road, 804-266-2494	Coed college prep for students with dyslexia and related learning differences	1974	220/5-12	✓	\$36,000	✓ athletics and clubs	4:1
The Steward School 11600 Gayton Road, 804-740-3394	Coed college prep	1972	715/JK-12	✓	\$19,725-\$31,280	✓	12:1
Trinity Episcopal School 3850 Pittaway Drive, 804-327-3105	Coed Episcopal	1972	514/8-12	✓	\$28,850	✓	8:1
Veritas School 3400 Brook Road, 804-272-9517	Classical Christian	2000	656/JK-12	uniforms	K-12: \$14,560-\$16,120; JK: \$1,500-\$4,225	✓	16:1

n/p = not provided Updated January 2025. To suggest an update to this listing, contact us at listupdate@richmag.com.



CAMPUS VISITS

High-tech climate tools, a new degree, accreditation and an arboretum at local colleges and universities

BY THARON GIDDENS

TREES OF KNOWLEDGE

A stroll about the **Randolph-Macon College** campus in Ashland can be a learning experience in itself. The school's 125-acre campus recently earned designation as a Level 1 arboretum courtesy of former student Jonas Fike, who graduated in spring 2024 with a bachelor's degree in environmental studies.

Fike worked on his research project under the guidance of biology professor Nick Ruppel and identified 27 tree species on campus. Willow oaks and red maples predominate, but the campus is also home to American sycamore, maidenhair tree, Japanese maple, dogwood, sassafras and

Lebanon cedar, according to ArbNet, the arboretum accrediting authority.

"The variety of flora on our campus has always inspired me and my students, and I am thrilled to have external recognition for our trees. I hope to continue sponsoring fieldwork and research that further catalogs this campus-wide asset," Ruppel says.

The criteria for attaining Level 1 arboretum status include identifying 25 or more species of woody plants on the site, having at least one worker or volunteer and a governing body, and having an arboretum plan, according to Arbnet. Most Level 1 sites are small and open to the public, such as golf courses, school campuses or cemeteries.

Virginia Commonwealth University received \$506 million in sponsored research funding in fiscal year 2024, thanks to 1,953 grant proposal submissions by faculty members.

TRACKING CHANGE

Three of Virginia's Native American tribes are getting some high-tech tools for dealing with climate change through a collaborative project with the **University of Richmond**. One of these tools is an online portal that will provide access to information such as climatology, images from satellites and other geographic data to the Nansemond, Mattaponi and Monacan nations. The three-year project is funded through a \$804,605 NASA grant.

The grant recipient is David Seward Salisbury, an associate professor of geography, environment and sustainability. He and UR geography professor Stephanie Spera, their students and researchers from Texas Tech will work with tribal members on the project.

"The online portal will work according to the planning, communications and educational goals of our Native American nation partners and will include the environmental, geographic, economic and social >

COURTESY VCU

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FUTURE READY



10:1

STUDENT-TO-FACULTY RATIO

100+

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

18

NCAA DIVISION III SPORTS

95

ADIRONDACK
CHAIRS ON
CAMPUS

99%

OF STUDENTS RECEIVE
SCHOLARSHIPS
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variables they prioritize,” Salisbury says.

Information available through the portal will enable the members of the three nations and their allies to monitor conditions and events and to identify climate trends so they can make informed decisions and actions, according to a release. Salisbury says the nations face common environmental factors, including changing temperatures, drought and rising sea levels.

“We anticipate the outcome will be an open-source online tool that facilitates greater collaboration between Native American nations and their governmental and nongovernmental institutional allies as we all work together toward a sustainable future in a Virginia whose climate is rapidly changing,” Salisbury says.

The project follows a NASA-funded effort led by Salisbury and Spera that worked over 20 years with Indigenous populations in the Amazon in Brazil and Peru.

NO COMMENT NEEDED

In addition to earning its 10-year reaccreditation in December, **Virginia Commonwealth University** also earned a rare, unspoken honor: the inclusion of no recommendations for improvements.

“It’s never happened before in university history that anyone can remember,” says Jeffrey Kraus, director of executive communications, office of the provost.

The review was conducted by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, which describes itself as “an institutional accreditor for quality assurance in higher education.”

“A university undergoing an accreditation review with no recommendations is simply outstanding,” said Fotis Sotiropoulos, VCU provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, in a release. “That result is a testament to the work of our entire university community. A positive SACSCOC reaffirmation directly ben-

efits students by adding legitimacy to their degrees.”

Steps in the review process include developing a Quality Enhancement Plan and conducting on-site visits.

“I am very proud of the results of this reaccreditation process, and of the staff and faculty who worked tirelessly to achieve it,” said VCU President Michael Rao. “It reaffirms what we see every day — that VCU is fully committed to the success of our students and ensuring they learn critical thinking and problem-solving skills.”

“Upon graduating, [VSU students] will emerge as innovative, connected, global leaders, fully prepared to make a meaningful impact in the field of social work.”

JIMMIE FEDRICK
VIRGINIA STATE
UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT
OF SOCIAL WORK CHAIR

MASTERS OF SOCIAL WORK

The social work master’s degree program at **Virginia State University** earned full accreditation in November, becoming the first such program specializing in trauma-informed care offered at a historically Black college or university, according to a release.

Jimmie Fedrick, the department chair, says the accreditation is an honor and a groundbreaking achievement for the school. “It affirms that our students are earning an education that meets the highest standards,” he said in a release. “Upon graduating, they will emerge as innovative, connected, global leaders, fully prepared to make a meaningful impact in the field of social work.”

Accreditation is through the Counsel on Social Work Education and is retroactive to fall 2022. The program

began with 10 students two years ago under provisional accreditation and now has 68 students.

FUNDING EDUCATORS

Education students at **Virginia Union University** now have an opportunity to hone their skills and enhance their employment prospects through a teaching residency program. A pilot program this spring will enhance the existing 16-week student teaching experience by assigning mentors and giving stipends to participants. The goal is to expand the initiative to a yearlong residency program for the 2025-26 school year, according to VUU.

Program funding comes through a \$230,000 teacher residency award — part of a \$2.3 million grant through the U.S. Department of Education — and in partnership with VCU. According to VUU, the grant aims to address critical shortages in the teaching profession by enhancing the recruitment, preparation and development of educators, particularly in high-need areas.

“Over the three-year grant period, we hope to provide resources for program and staff development to help or impact 10 university students directly and more K-12 students with those program completers that will ultimately be leading classes in the commonwealth,” says Joan B. Johnson, dean of education for VUU.

Once the program expands to full time for the 2025-26 academic year, each student will receive a \$20,000 stipend. “Research has shown that the stipend can impact the motivation of the student participants to complete the preparation program and increase chances of retention,” Johnson says. “The stipend provides an opportunity for the individual to dedicate their attention solely on the educational and experiential demands of the program. Those selected for the program will have the financial resources for tuition, cost of licensure assessments, [and] potentially child care or even rent during the program.” ■

Un-Wine'd

Hosted by Tassie Pippert, "Un-Wine'd" unveils local winemaking traditions and the rich history of wine in the Commonwealth. Along the way, learn a bit about modern wine production techniques and spend time in Tassie's kitchen putting together some fantastic recipes that pair well with the featured wines.

Photo Courtesy of Monica Pedynkowski

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COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES IN VIRGINIA

	College/university	Location	Phone	Website	On-campus enrollment (Fall 2024)	Annual tuition & fees (2024-25)	Acceptance rate	Student-Instructor ratio
PUBLIC	Christopher Newport University	Newport News	757-594-7000	cnu.edu	4,369	\$16,828	88%	13-1
	George Mason University	Fairfax	703-993-1000	gmu.edu	28,956	\$14,220	89%	16-1
	James Madison University	Harrisonburg	540-568-6211	jmu.edu	21,112	\$14,242	76%	17-1
	Longwood University	Farmville	434-395-2000	longwood.edu	3,314	\$15,740	85%	13-1
	Norfolk State University	Norfolk	757-823-8600	nsu.edu	5,412	\$10,180	88%	15-1
	Old Dominion University	Norfolk	757-683-3685	odu.edu	17,746	\$12,750	90%	15-1
	Radford University	Radford	540-831-5000	radford.edu	6,161	\$12,548	91%	12-1
	Richard Bland College	Petersburg	804-862-6100	rbc.edu	2,716	\$9,093	79%	20-1
	University of Mary Washington	Fredericksburg	540-654-1000	umw.edu	3,660	\$14,905	85%	13-1
	University of Virginia	Charlottesville	434-924-0311	virginia.edu	17,892	\$19,414	24%	15-1
	University of Virginia's College at Wise	Wise	276-328-0100	uvawise.edu	2,304	\$11,780	99%	13-1
	Virginia Commonwealth University	Richmond	804-828-0100	vcu.edu	21,482	\$16,720	93%	16-1
	Virginia Military Institute (military)	Lexington	540-464-7230	vmi.edu	1,527	\$21,046	82%	10-1
	Virginia State University	Petersburg	804-524-5000	vsu.edu	5,124	\$10,043	89%	13-1
	Virginia Tech	Blacksburg	540-231-6267	vt.edu	31,035	\$15,950	57%	13-1
	William & Mary	Williamsburg	757-221-4000	wm.edu	7,063	\$25,734	33%	13-1
NONPROFIT PRIVATE	Averett University	Danville	800-283-7388	averett.edu	1,228	\$38,400	76%	12-1
	Bluefield University	Bluefield	800-872-0175	bluefield.edu	685	\$27,800	72%	14-1
	Bridgewater College	Bridgewater	540-828-8000	bridgewater.edu	1,407	\$41,350	90%	13-1
	Christendom College	Front Royal	540-636-2900	christendom.edu	554	\$30,420	85%	15-1
	Eastern Mennonite University	Harrisonburg	540-432-4118	emu.edu	791	\$40,990	99%	10-1
	Emory and Henry University	Emory	276-944-4121	emoryhenry.edu	1,083	\$35,155	73%	10-1
	Ferrum College	Ferrum	800-868-9797	ferrum.edu	742	\$38,320	75%	13-1
	Hampden-Sydney College (men only)	Hampden Sydney	434-223-6000	hsc.edu	946	\$51,808	40%	9-1
	Hampton University	Hampton	757-727-5000	hamptonu.edu	3,728	\$29,162	74%	13-1
	Hollins University (women only)	Roanoke	800-456-9595	hollins.edu	665	\$42,600	72%	9-1
	Liberty University	Lynchburg	855-731-2512	liberty.edu	50,591	\$23,800	99%	18-1
	Mary Baldwin University	Staunton	540-887-7019	marybaldwin.edu	1,122	\$32,036	90%	12-1
	Marymount University	Arlington	703-522-5600	marymount.edu	2,505	\$37,400	81%	13-1
	Randolph College	Lynchburg	434-947-8000	randolphcollege.edu	703	\$27,930	95%	8-1
	Randolph-Macon College	Ashland	804-752-7200	rmc.edu	1,643	\$46,460	72%	10-1
	Regent University	Virginia Beach	800-373-5504	regent.edu	4,292	\$19,680	32%	21-1
	Roanoke College	Salem	540-375-2500	roanoke.edu	1,783	\$35,350	80%	10-1
	Shenandoah University	Winchester	540-665-4500	su.edu	2,641	\$35,170	78%	10-1
	Southern Virginia University	Buena Vista	540-261-8400	svu.edu	946	\$19,108	98.9%	17-1
	Sweet Briar College (women only)	Sweet Briar	434-381-6100	sbc.edu	437	\$24,740	77%	8-1
	University of Lynchburg	Lynchburg	434-544-8100	lynchburg.edu	1,595	\$34,500	96%	10-1
	University of Richmond	Richmond	804-289-8000	richmond.edu	3,055	\$65,230	24%	8-1
	Virginia Union University	Richmond	804-257-5600	vuu.edu	1,238	\$14,530	81%	16-1
	Virginia Wesleyan University	Norfolk, Virginia Beach	757-455-3200	vwu.edu	1,467	\$36,550	81%	14-1
	Washington and Lee University	Lexington	540-458-8400	wlu.edu	1,886	\$63,315	17%	8-1

Updated January 2025. Check with schools for the most up-to-date figures.



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STEP UP

New leadership and funding could reshape community colleges

BY THARON GIDDENS

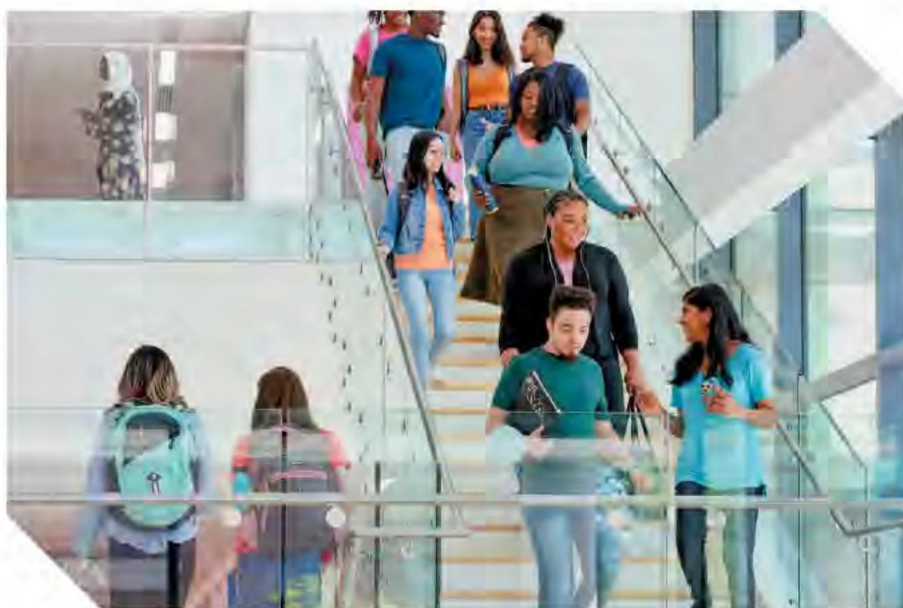
HELPING STUDENT PARENTS

A program at **Brightpoint Community College** that supports students who are also parents has received a \$10,000 funding boost.

Brightpoint's College Attainment for Parent Students received with the funds in November through the Truist Charitable Fund. "This grant funding will help students facing financial challenges so they can continue their education and achieve their goals," says Bill Fiege, Brightpoint's president.

CAPS provides financial help to 20 students each semester to pay for child care and any unexpected living expenses. It also provides learning materials for children to help Virginia schools create family-friendly campuses, according to the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education. At Brightpoint, participating students can receive a \$2,000 stipend each semester for child care and other expenses; emergency funding is also available. Single parents to children up to 18 years old are eligible.

"The financial support has been so beneficial to all of our CAPS students, but particularly our nursing students. Many of them have to work reduced hours so they can complete clinicals, study, be in class and still be Mom or Dad to their children. This is not always compatible with life in general," says Holly Walker, director of communications and public relations. "Many of the CAPS students have shared how all of these different supports have been invaluable to their experience with the college in all areas. The wraparound services that



Brightpoint
Community
College

have been offered and used have propelled them to reach their dreams of providing a life for their families."

Brightpoint is one of five community colleges in Virginia with CAPS pilot programs.

THE BODY ELECTRIC

Reynolds Community College has been awarded about \$924,000 in federal funding to encourage more students to enroll in training for in-demand health care occupations in metro Richmond. Virginia's senators, Mark Warner and Tim Kaine, secured the funding, which is targeted to renovate laboratories and buy equipment. The upgrades include expanding simulation labs that provide lifelike training opportunities for the students, such as artificial "patients" that simulate conditions and symptoms the students would experience in a real operating theater.

"I'm excited to see how this will grow Virginia's health care workforce," Kaine said in a social media post following a visit to inspect the downtown campus health care training site in July.

INDEPENDENCE DAY IS COMING

Richard Bland College of William &

Mary may soon have its own board of visitors. Such a governing board for the two-year affiliate school received unanimous support of the William & Mary Board of Visitors in November, and the General Assembly is expected to consider a bill to grant an independent board in the legislature's 2025 session.

A similar measure passed the Senate in 2023 but failed to make it to the governor's office. The Virginia Secretary of Education's office also recommended a dedicated board for Richard Bland in 2024.

Richard Bland College President Debbie L. Sydow noted in a release that other Virginia universities, including Old Dominion, Christopher Newport and Virginia Commonwealth, were once governed by the William & Mary Board of Visitors. "Each has evolved in response to Virginia's economic and industry needs, and these universities are presently among the finest in the state," she said. "Richard Bland College now stands ready to work with a dedicated governing board to explore strategic alternatives and further position itself to optimally serve the educational and economic needs of Petersburg, rural Southside Virginia and the commonwealth." ■

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Bluefield University \$395 per online undergraduate credit hour; eight majors available. \$475-\$800 per graduate credit hour depending on program. 800-872-0175 or bluefield.edu.

Brightpoint Community College

\$164.61 per credit hour in-state. Online associate's degrees in a variety of disciplines. Teacher recertification courses available. 800 Charter Colony Parkway, Midlothian, 804-796-4000; 13101 Route 1, Chester, 804-796-4000 or brightpoint.edu.

Community College Workforce Alliance

Workplace training courses in the greater Richmond region as a partnership between Brightpoint and Reynolds community colleges. Multiple training and meeting facilities, 804-523-2292 or ccwatraining.org.

Lifelong Learning Institute

Academic and fitness classes for ages 50 and older. \$150 membership per year. 13801 Westfield Road, 804-378-2527 or lilchesterfield.org.

Mary Baldwin University Online, MBU Online

\$460 per credit hour. Mary Baldwin University offers online undergraduate and graduate degrees, and certificates in 43 majors and programs: business, criminal justice, education, psychology, social work, Master of Business Administration, Master of Healthcare Administration, nursing

to registered nurse and more. online.marybaldwin.edu.

Old Dominion University, ODUGlobal

\$408 per undergraduate credit hour for students with Virginia domicile, \$439 for students living outside Virginia; \$620

per graduate credit hour for Virginia residents with Virginia domicile. 176 online degrees and certificates in business, education, engineering, health/social sciences, nursing and technology. Transfer agreements with Reynolds and Brightpoint. 800-968-2638 or online.odu.edu.



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Reynolds Community College

\$176 per credit hour; visit website for details. *Parham Road campus, 1651 E. Parham Road; Downtown campus, 700 E. Jackson St.; Goochland campus, 1851 Dickinson Road; The Kitchens at Reynolds, 2500 Nine Mile Road; 804-371-3000 or reynolds.edu.*

Union Presbyterian Seminary

\$500 per semester hour. Graduate programs in biblical and theological studies, ministry, and Christian education. *3401 Brook Road, 800-229-2990 or upsem.edu.*

University of Richmond, School of Professional and Continuing Studies

Degree program tuition starts at \$575 per semester hour. Other course fees vary by program. Evening undergraduate and master's degrees in education, liberal arts, information systems, HRM and more, plus professional development and training programs including a coding

boot camp. Also offers the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. *490 Westhampton Way, 804-289-8133 or spcs.richmond.edu.*

University of Richmond, Robins School of Business

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Virginia Commonwealth University

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Virginia Union University

Nondegree courses, police academy courses and a weekend teacher licensure program. 1500 N. Lombardy St., 804-257-5600 or vu.edu.

Visual Arts Center of Richmond

A longstanding community arts center that offers more than 1,500 youth and adult art classes in 12 mediums, including drawing, painting, creative writing, clay, photography, digital arts, glass, fiber, metals and jewelry, and more. 1812 W. Main St., 804-353-0094 or visarts.org.

VMFA Studio School

Classes for ages 16 and older

in creative writing, drawing, printmaking, painting, pottery, design, photography and yoga. 200 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd., 804-340-1405 or vmfa.museum/studio-school.

PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS**Bon Secours Memorial College of Nursing**

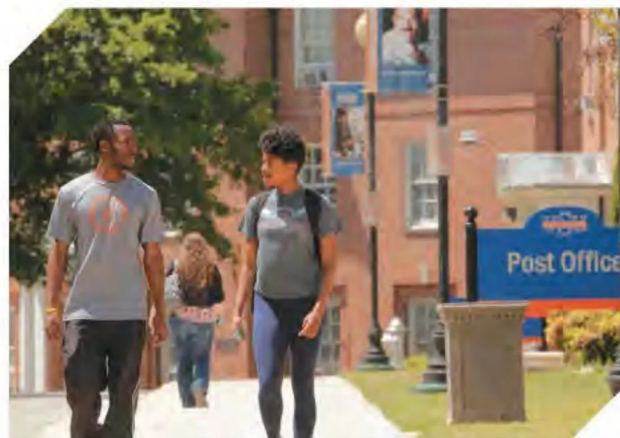
Offers a Bachelor of Science in nursing taken inperson and online. Registered nurse to bachelor's program available. 8550 Magellan Parkway, Suite 1100, 804-627-5300 or bsmcon.edu.

Bryant & Stratton College

Degree and diploma programs in business, nursing, medical assisting, hospitality, legal services and technology. 8141 Hull Street Road, 804-745-2444 or bryantstratton.edu.

ECPI

Degree and diploma programs in technology, business, criminal justice, health science, nursing and culinary arts. Technology, Business



& Culinary Arts, 11104 W. Broad St., Glen Allen, 804-934-0100; Nursing & Health Science, 2809 Emerywood Parkway, Suite 400, 804-417-4742 or ecpi.edu.

Lotus Professional College

State-certified training in acupuncture, therapeutic massage and esthetics. 8935 Patterson Ave., 804-290-0980 or lotus.edu.

South University

Programs in health care, public health, criminal justice, business, psychology and more. 2151 Old Brick Road, Glen Allen, 804-727-6800 or southuniversity.edu. ■

Updated August 2024. To suggest an update to this listing, please email listupdate@richmag.com, subject line: school chart update.

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INDEPENDENT BOARDING SCHOOLS

This directory of private boarding schools outside the Richmond area was provided by the Virginia Council for Private Education. For accreditation status or other information, call 804-423-6435 or visit vcpe.org.

Blue Ridge School Grades 9-12 boys, boarding, nondenominational. 273 Mayo Drive, St. George, 434-985-2811.

Chatham Hall Grades 9-12 girls, boarding and day, Episcopal. 800 Chatham Hall Circle, Chatham, 434-432-2941.

Christchurch School Grades 9-12 coed, boarding and day, Episcopal. 49 Seahorse Lane, Christchurch, 804-758-2306.

Episcopal High School Grades 9-12 coed, boarding, Episcopal. 1200 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria, 703-933-3000.

Fishburne Military School Grades 7-12 boys, boarding, five-day boarding, day, U.S. Army JROTC. 225 S. Wayne Ave., Waynesboro, 800-946-7773.

Fork Union Military Academy Grades 7-12/postgraduate boys, boarding, military. 4744 James Madison Highway, Fork Union, 434-842-4205.

Foxcroft School Grades 9-12 girls, boarding and day. 22407 Foxhound Lane, Middleburg, 540-687-5555.

Hargrave Military Academy Grades 7-12/postgraduate boys, military. 200 Military Drive, Chatham, 434-432-2481.

Oak Hill Academy Grades 8-12 coed, boarding, Baptist. 2635 Oak Hill Road, Mouth of Wilson, 276-579-2619.

Randolph-Macon Academy Grades 6-12/postgraduate coed, boarding and day, Methodist. Air Force JROTC for 9-12. 200 Academy Drive, Front Royal, 540-636-5200.

Shenandoah Valley Academy Grades 9-12 coed, boarding, Seventh-day Adventist. 234 W. Lee Highway, New Market, 540-740-3161.

St. Anne's-Belfield School PS-12 coed, nondenominational, day for PS-12 and boarding for 9-12. PS-8 school: 799 Faulconer Drive, Charlottesville, 434-296-5106. 9-12 school: 2132 Ivy Road, Charlottesville, 434-296-5106.

St. Margaret's School Grades 8-12/postgraduate girls, boarding and day, Episcopal. 444 Water Lane, Tappahannock, 804-443-3357.

Stuart Hall School Grades 6-12 coed, boarding for 8-12 and day for 6-12, Episcopal. Upper/middle school: 235 W. Frederick St., Staunton, 540-248-2404.

Virginia Episcopal School Grades 9-12 coed, boarding and day, Episcopal. 400 VES Road, Lynchburg, 434-385-3600.

Wakefield Country Day School PS-12 coed. 1059 Zachary Taylor Highway, Huntly, 540-635-8555.

Williamsburg Christian Academy PS-12 coed, boarding and day, Christian. 101 School House Lane, Williamsburg, 757-220-1978.

Woodberry Forest School Grades 9-12 boys, boarding. 898 Woodberry Forest Road, Woodberry Forest, 540-672-3900. ■

Updated July 2024. To suggest an update to this listing, contact us at lstupdate@richmag.com.



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THAT'S STILL REVERED TODAY

BY SUSAN HIGGINS

"You can't live in Richmond and not admire him. You won't find a garden in Richmond that isn't influenced by him. You can't be a landscape designer in Richmond and not be inspired by him," says Wendell Welder, owner of Wendell Welder Landscape Design. Such is the enduring influence of Richmond landscape architect Charles F. Gillette.

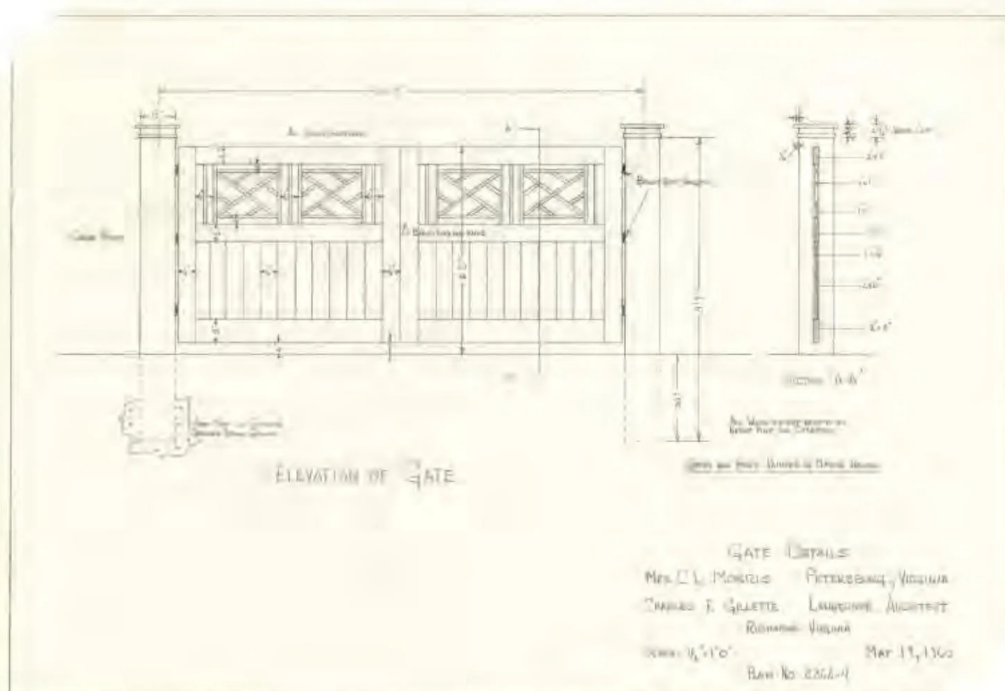
Gillette spent his life transforming green spaces in Virginia and North Carolina into meticulously conceived gardens. He completed more than 2,500 commissions over his 56-year career, an impressive body of work that included the campuses of William & Mary, Radford University, the University of Mary Washington and James Madison University, as well as the grounds of Reynolds Metals Company's international headquarters, Ethyl Corporation's corporate campus at Gambles Hill Park and St. Joseph's Villa on Richmond's North Side. >

ROGER FOLEY





The Garden Club of Virginia restored this Charles Gillette garden at the Virginia Executive Mansion.



Above, from left: Charles Gillette; gates designed for a private home in Petersburg; Gillette's office and later residence at 105 E. Cary St.; Gillette's plan for the Virginia Avenue entrance to Blandford Cemetery in Petersburg

Gillette's impact also lives on in the grounds of many Virginia historic homes, including the gardens at Agecroft Hall and Virginia House, both crafted from reconstructed English manor houses that were meticulously taken apart, shipped to Richmond and rebuilt as private homes at the center of the Windsor Farms neighborhood. But he was at his best as a planner of private estates. In his book "Genius in the Garden," George C. Longest credits Gillette with the creation of 378 residential projects in Virginia, 198 of which were in Richmond. He was responsible for the look of the Windsor Farms neighborhood as well as many other distinctive properties along River Road, Cary Street Road and Monument Avenue. In 1916, Gillette converted an antebellum farm into a charming residential enclave that today is known as Henrico's historic Chatham Hills neighborhood.

Gillette inherited his knowledge of plants from his father, a farmer and herbalist who often took his son on rounds through the countryside as he attended to his patients. Although finances prevented him

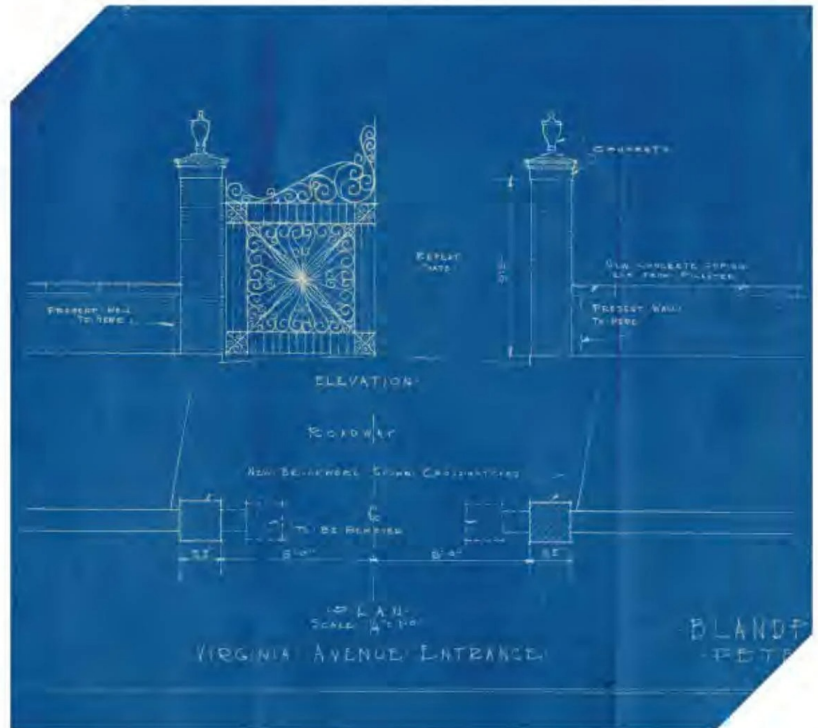
from acquiring a formal education, Gillette was an ardent reader, eventually amassing a significant collection of books about horticulture and landscape design. He took his first job in landscape design in the Boston-based office of leading landscape architect Warren H. Manning, who sent him to Richmond in 1913 to supervise the completion of what is now the campus of the University of Richmond.

In 1912, a wealthy patron financed a two-month tour of the major parks and gardens of Ireland, England, France and Holland to further Gillette's professional studies. The experience was transformative. Returning to Richmond at the age of 33, he opened his own practice, putting down roots in a city whose gardens would come to be defined by his signature style. Gillette blended the traditional formal gardens of the 17th and early 18th centuries, with their pergolas, reflecting pools and low stone walls, with the organic appeal of 18th-century British naturalism. It was a mixture of influences that he populated with plants that thrived in

Richmond's hot, humid climate.

In the early part of the 20th century, Richmond was primed for the talents of a gifted young landscape architect. Owning a country house surrounded by elaborate gardens came into vogue just as the city was recovering from the post-Civil War economy. Wealthy residents were building homes in the Ginter Park, Highland Park and Windsor Farms neighborhoods. They wanted grand gardens to complement their elegant new homes.

A Gillette garden is more than just an artful arrangement of plants. There is a narrative quality to his work, articulated in the visual vocabulary of the natural world. Broad, open expanses are juxtaposed against intimate garden "rooms." Decorative gates open into enclosed spaces with fountains, sundials and statues serving as focal points. Formal plantings are arranged in structured symmetry and furnished with sculptures and benches. Spring bulbs planted in boxwood-edged beds bloom in harmony with Virginia cedar, azalea, camellia, crepe myrtle, daffodil and yew. His



spaces were imposing, intimate and unpretentious. Eventually, Gillette's aesthetic became a regional aesthetic known as "the Virginia garden."

In 1954, at the request of Virginia Gov. Thomas B. Stanley, Gillette was commissioned to reimagine the circa 1813 plantings on the south side of Virginia's Executive Mansion as a formal garden suitable for entertaining. Gillette chose traditional elements for his design to complement the home's Federal-period architecture. Brick walkways, terraces and lawns flanked by boxwood-edged beds embodied a private oasis, removed from the activity of Capitol Square and downtown Richmond. The Garden Club of Virginia restored the garden in 1999.

The boxwoods that anchor so many of Richmond's gardens are a hallmark of Gillette's work. "He defined spaces by molding boxwood hedges like living architecture," Welder notes, "and then planted perennials in contrast to their dark, glossy background." Gillette borrowed his beloved boxwood from Virginia's early gardening traditions, combining

*"You won't
find a
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by him."*

WENDELL WELDER,
OWNER OF WENDELL WELDER
LANDSCAPE DESIGN

them with the classic landscapes that he had discovered abroad.

Gillette's ability to integrate architecture into its environment was masterful. At Virginia House in Windsor Farms, he designed a series of descending terraces and pools along a challenging downhill slope to connect the building to its surroundings. The University of Richmond campus owes its serene, secluded atmosphere to the trees and shrubbery Gillette

used as natural screening. At Reynolds Metals, now headquarters to Altria, he used plants to blend the building's rigid lines into its park-like landscape. "He had a sympathy for the land," Welder says, "a way of collaborating with it, leading you through a space on brick walkways, over elevation changes, into open view sheds and densely planted gardens."

Much of Gillette's original work has been meticulously restored by its present-day owners, who are often able to refer to his original plans — many of which have been preserved in Library of Virginia Special Collections. The Garden Club of Virginia alone is responsible for the restoration of five of his public gardens across the state. His legacy also lives on in the work of a new generation of designers who have been inspired to incorporate his blend of formal and naturalistic elements with their surrounding architecture and environment. So steeped is the commonwealth in Gillette's artful aesthetic that it has become synonymous with the idea of a garden itself. ■

FINDING ART AND DESIGN

Annual house and garden tours, art shows and artisan markets **BY JOAN TUPPENCE**

Southern charm and modern elegance intertwine in the city and beyond, offering a plethora of opportunities to learn about the homes and gardens in the area and take home some fantastic artistic finds.

April

HISTORIC GARDEN WEEK

This revered event, presented annually by the Garden Club of Virginia since 1929, features over 100 stunning private properties. Over 20 tours are organized and hosted by member clubs in the Richmond area and throughout the state and typically include access to the gardens and grounds as well as some of the interiors. vagardenweek.org

May

ARTS IN THE PARK

Find more than 350 exhibitors from around the country selling their paintings, pottery, jewelry, glass creations, textiles, yard art and more. Admission is free to the nationally rated juried show at the Carillon in Byrd Park. richmondartsinthepark.com

WEST AVENUE GARDEN TOUR

Celebrate spring on a self-guided walking tour of all the gardens on West Avenue as well as the alley-bordering homes on Park Avenue and Franklin Street. West Avenue's premier event of the year features live music, children's activities and refreshments. Free. westave.org/garden-tour

MUSEUM DISTRICT MOTHER'S DAY HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR

Explore historic homes and gardens in the Museum District while you celebrate Mother's Day. The tour has



The West Avenue Garden Tour will be held on Sunday, April 27, 2025.

been held annually for the past 28 years, and its proceeds are reinvested in the neighborhood and help support local nonprofits. During the event, trolleys run a continuous loop along the tour route, departing from the Virginia Museum of History & Culture's parking lot. museumdistrict.org

FAN ARTS STROLL

Wander along Hanover and Grove avenues to find more than 120 artists and vendors along with musicians and a bevy of food trucks. Free. fandistrict.org

October-November

MAYMONT GARDEN GLOW

Experience Maymont's Gilded Age gardens and pastoral grounds illuminated in colorful lights. Then, head to the Carriage House lawn for the Glow Village fire pit, food trucks and activities for all ages. maymont.org

November

DOMINION ENERGY GARDENFEST OF LIGHTS

Stroll through the millions of twinkling lights that envelop Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, check out the holiday decorations and model >



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trains, sip on hot chocolate and more. Purchase advance timed tickets at lewisginter.org.

CRAFT + DESIGN SHOW

Kick off the holiday season with the Visual Arts Center of Richmond's annual museum-quality contemporary craft and art show, which has excited collectors for six decades. The diverse collection showcases creations by more than 150 artists from across the country. craftanddesignrva.com

December

ASHLAND CHRISTMAS MARKET

Head to Historic Downtown Ashland, where you'll find unique handcrafted gifts by more than 60 local artists and makers. A variety of local eateries are open during the event. Free. ashlandvirginia.com

YULETIDES AT AGECROFT HALL

Experience the Christmas traditions of 17th-century England, 19th-

century London and 20th-century Richmond. Explore the festive gardens and museum and enjoy cider, crafts and music. Free. agecrofthall.org

FAN DISTRICT HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR

Now in its sixth decade, the Fan District Holiday House Tour features a collection of historic homes that capture the neighborhood's architectural grandeur in all of its holiday glory. The annual event raises funds to support programs dedicated to the preservation, restoration and betterment of the Fan District community. fandistrict.org

CHURCH HILL HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR

With more than 50 years of history, this annual event explores the interiors of some of the oldest historic homes in the city and new neighborhood homes decorated for the holidays, as well as other buildings

that celebrate the unique architectural history of Church Hill. churchhill.org

Throughout the year

MODERN RICHMOND TOURS

For over a decade, Modern Richmond has offered tours and pop-ups to promote and celebrate modernism in Richmond and around Virginia, showcasing a variety of buildings ranging from company headquarters to waterfront residences. modernrichmond.org

QUOIT CLUB TOURS

The Quoit Club, part of Historic Richmond, provides members with insight from experts on the city's history, architecture and culture. Club members have access to exclusive tours of Richmond's historic buildings, adaptive reuse projects and at-risk architectural sites. The 2025 season runs from April to September, with events held on the third Thursday of each month. historicrichmond.com ■



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CENTURIES OF STYLE

Discover 250 years of design trends at Richmond's many historic homes **BY EVAN A. MORGAN**

One of Richmond's greatest features is its abundance of breathtaking architecture that spans several centuries and myriad architectural styles. Journey through 250 years of Richmond's design history on tours of these storied homes that are open to the public.

AGECROFT HALL 4305 Sulgrave Road

Transport yourself to the English countryside in the picturesque gardens and 14th-century manor home that comprise Agecroft Hall. Originally built in Lancashire, England, Agecroft had amassed over 400 years of history before making its journey to Richmond. Purchased at auction in 1925 by T.C. Williams Jr., Agecroft was carefully dismantled and shipped across the ocean to be reconstructed as his private residence. Furnished with antique English pieces, the house is open for tours and private events. agecrofthall.org

BATTERSEA 1289 Upper Appomattox St., Petersburg

A stunning example of both the Neo-Palladian and Federal styles, Battersea perfectly represents the height of architectural fashion at the time of its creation. Completed in 1768 by John Bannister, the first mayor of Petersburg and an active revolutionary, the home bore witness to the birth of a nation and the struggles that followed. Owned by the Battersea Foundation, a nonprofit devoted to preserving the property's history, Battersea is also a Virginia Historic Landmark and on the National Register of Historic Places. Tours available by appointment. batterseafound.org

Branch
Museum
of Design





FROM TOP RIGHT: CITY OF PETERSBURG TOURISM; THE BRANCH



BRANCH HOUSE 2501 Monument Ave.

This stunning 27,000-square-foot Tudor Revival home was completed in 1919 for the financier John Kerr Branch. Created to complement Branch's large collection of antiques, the interior is adorned with intricate wood carvings and stonework. Now on the National Register of Historic Places, the Branch House is also home to The Branch Museum of Design. Tours of the John Russell Pope-designed mansion are offered by reservation. branchmuseum.org

CENTRE HILL MANSION 1 Centre Hill Court, Petersburg

Used as the backdrop for several films and TV shows, Centre Hill Mansion's beauty cannot be denied. Completed in 1823 by Robert Bolling IV in the Federal style, the mansion was remodeled by his son in 1850 in the Greek Revival style. The stately residence has since had the privilege of hosting two U.S. presidents: Abraham Lincoln and William Howard Taft. Now on the National Register of Historic Places, the mansion serves as a museum; its basement galleries

contain exhibits on the history of Petersburg, including pieces from Centre Hill's own archives. Open daily. visitpetersburgva.org

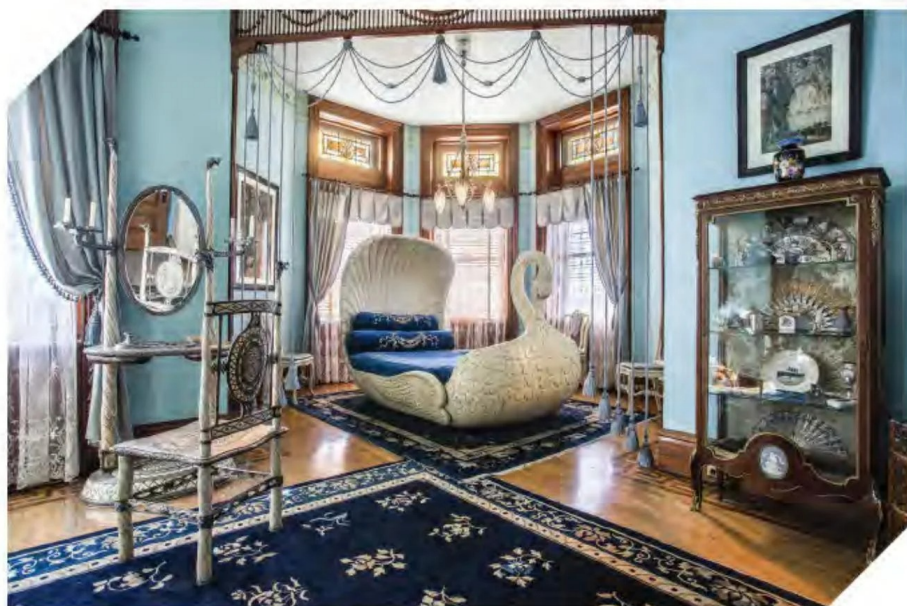
JOHN MARSHALL HOUSE 818 E. Marshall St.

Learn about the legacy of the "Grand Chief Justice of the United States" and Founding Father John Marshall in his home of 45 years. Built in 1790, the house witnessed the most pivotal years of Marshall's career and boasts a large collection of Marshall family artifacts. Open for tours Thursday through Sunday. preservationvirginia.org

MAGGIE WALKER HOUSE 110 1/2 E. Leigh St.

Immerse yourself in the life and career of Maggie L. Walker at her home in Jackson Ward. Acquired by Walker in 1904, the house — now a National Park Service historic site — remained in her family for several generations and contains many of her personal possessions and furnishings, providing a unique view of the entrepreneur and community leader's experiences. nps.gov/mawa >

Olde Town
Petersburg's
Centre Hill
Mansion
House



Above: Sallie Dooley's Swan bedroom at Maymont Mansion; below right: the courtyard at The Wickham Valentine House

MAYMONT MANSION 1700 Hampton St.

Observe a beautifully preserved Gilded Age mansion resplendent with luxurious fixtures and furnishings of the period. Designed as a home for James and Sallie Dooley and completed in 1893, the mansion served as the couple's home until Sallie's death in 1925. It was then bequeathed to the city of Richmond and converted into a museum displaying the Dooleys' opulent living spaces alongside the servants' quarters and their working environments. *Check before going; the house is temporarily closed for restoration. maymont.org

PATRICK HENRY'S SCOTCHTOWN 16120 Chiswell Lane, Beaverdam

Visit the site where many of Patrick Henry's revolutionary ideas were first formulated. A small plantation built in the early 18th century by Charles Chiswell, Scotchtown was later inhabited by Patrick Henry and his family from 1771 to 1778. Though the building has changed hands many times, it has since been restored to the style of the period in which Henry resided there. Open on weekends. preservationvirginia.org

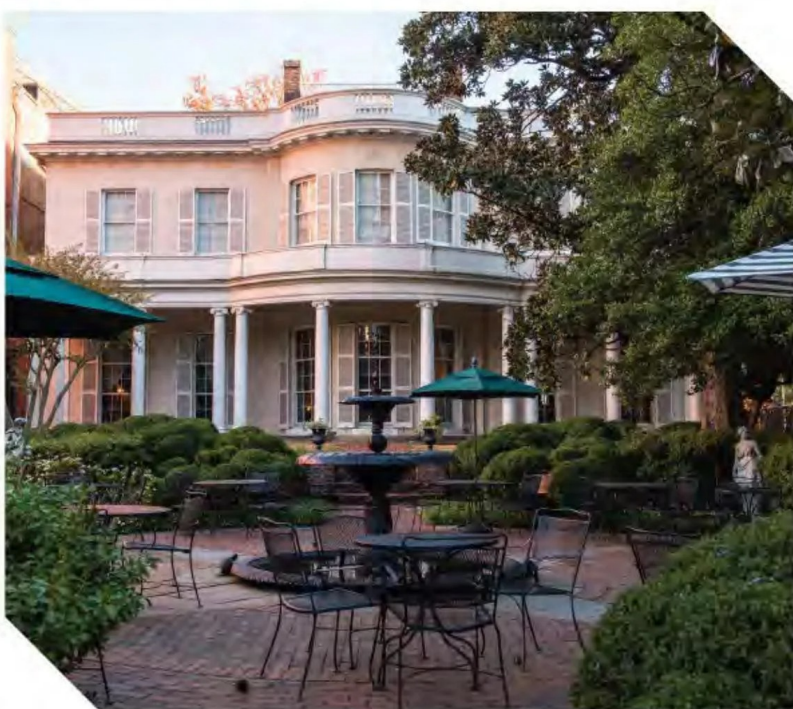
VIRGINIA HOUSE 4301 Sulgrave Road

Perched on a hill overlooking the James River in Richmond stands a remarkable Tudor-style home. Completed just before the stock market crash of 1929, Virginia House was constructed with materials from a 16th-century English manor. Designed by its original owners, Alexander and Virginia Weddell, the house has a con-

temporary floor plan including seven bathrooms, a modern kitchen and multiple closets. Surrounded by the sumptuous landscape designs of Charles F. Gillette, the home's interiors are equally impressive, decorated with fine European antiques and accessories. Now owned by the Virginia Historical Society, Virginia House is available for private events. virginiahistory.org

THE WICKHAM- VALENTINE HOUSE 1015 E. Clay St.

Peek into the world of aristocratic urban living in early 19th-century Richmond at the Wickham house. A grand Federal-era home erected at the heart of the city in 1815 for the Wickham family and their staff, it later became the first home acquired by the Valentine museum. Restored to its original Federal period appearance in the 1980s, the home offers a rich window into history and is open daily. thevalentine.org >



FROM TOP: DALE QUARTERMAN; STEVEN CASANOVA



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Wilton House dining room

WILTON HOUSE

215 S. Wilton Road

Take in a timeless display of Georgian architecture at Wilton House. Constructed in 1753 for the prominent Randolph family, the house was the focal point of their 2,000-acre tobacco plantation in Henrico. After falling into disrepair, the house was purchased by The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1932. To save it, the Dames moved and rebuilt the structure at its current location, where it is open for daily tours. wiltonhousemuseum.org ■

MORE TO EXPLORE

These examples of the area's outstanding architecture and design are mostly open by appointment only.

Armour House and Gardens at Meadowview Park

4001 Clarendon Road, Henrico
The Victorian-style Armour House was built in 1915, and the surrounding park includes a walking trail, tennis courts, gardens and children's play areas. Tours by appointment (park open dawn-dusk). 804-652-1430 or henrico.us/rec/places/armour-house

Bolling Haxall House

211 E. Franklin St.
Home to the Woman's Club since 1900, this Italianate-style mansion was built in 1858 for Bolling Walker Haxall, heir to a flour-milling fortune. Tours by appointment. 804-643-2847 or twrichmond.org

Church Quarter

12432 Old Ridge Road (old Route 738), Doswell
This is the best-preserved antebellum log dwelling in the region. Tours by appointment. 804-883-6252 or 804-516-3218

Clarke-Palmore House Museum

904 McCoul St., Henrico
The museum interprets the story of the Palmore family, who

lived on this farm during the Great Depression. Tours by appointment. 804-652-3406 or henrico.us/rec/places/clarke-palmore

Hanover Tavern

13181 Hanover Courthouse Road, Hanover
Frequently visited by Revolutionary armies and Civil War troops, Hanover Tavern was also home to Patrick Henry for a time. The tavern has a self-guided audio tour and a Civil War exhibit, as well as a restaurant and pub. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday. 804-537-5050 or hanovertavern.org

Magnolia Grange

10020 Iron Bridge Road, Chesterfield
This Federal-era home was built in 1823 by William Winfree and interprets 19th-century country mansion life. Includes the Chesterfield Historical Society's gift shop. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. 804-748-1498 or chesterfield.gov



Armour House

Meadow Farm Museum at Crump Park

3400 Mountain Road, Glen Allen
This 1860s living-history farm and museum features a farmhouse, crops, farm animals and costumed interpreters. Tours by appointment (park open dawn-dusk). 804-652-1455 or henrico.us/rec/places/meadow-farm

Oak Hill

151 Carroll Ave., Colonial Heights
Built in 1825, this one-story frame house with Greek Revival interior detail is on the National Register of Historic Places. The home is privately owned and does not offer tours, but you can get a glimpse from the road. colonialheightsva.gov

Sycamore Tavern

17193 Mountain Road, Montpelier
Built circa 1732 as a stagecoach stop, the tavern now houses the Florence L. Page Library of Local History and Genealogy. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday and Friday; 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. 804-883-5355

Walkerton Tavern

2892 Mountain Road, Glen Allen
Built by John Walker in 1825, the structure served as a tavern as well as a field hospital for Union cavalrymen in 1864. Managed by the Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen; tours by appointment. 804-261-2787 or artsglenallen.com ■



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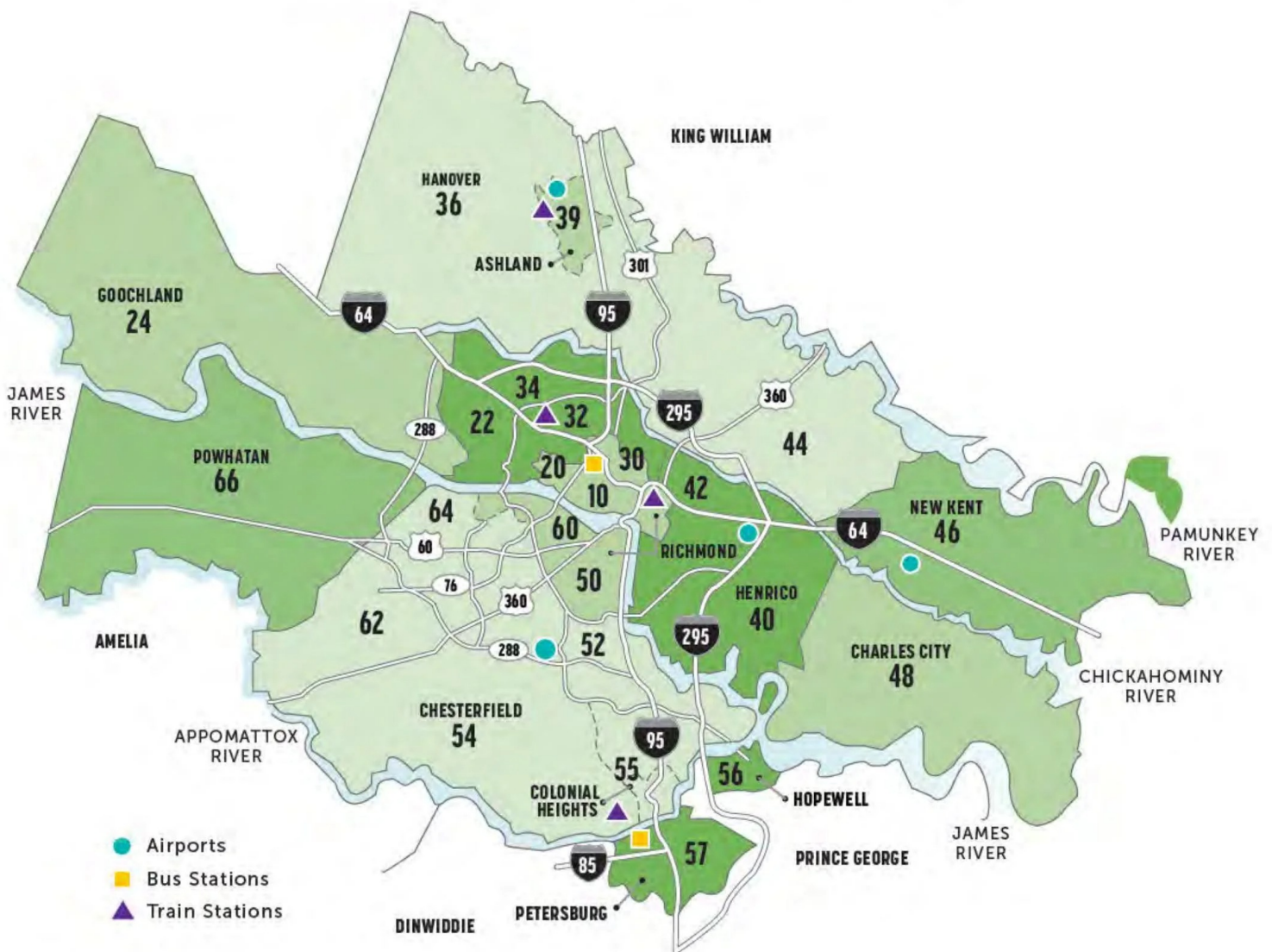


Sense of Place

FINDING THE ZONE YOU WANT TO CALL HOME

BY RICHMOND
MAGAZINE STAFF

Richmond is a patchwork of neighborhoods, many with distinct characters but names you may not find on signs. Real estate agents will ask which MLS zone you'd like to live in, while locals extol the virtues of the Fan or Church Hill. We've combined the two approaches to give you a quick guide to Richmond's regions.



IN THE CITY

10: City of Richmond

The city's neighborhoods are walkable and bikeable, brimming with shops, restaurants and entertainment venues. You'll find turn-of-the-20th-century row houses in the Fan, Jackson Ward and the Museum District; a youthful industrial vibe in Scott's Addition; art galleries and hip living spaces in the Arts District; eclectic row houses and bungalows in Carytown; pre-Civil War homes in Church Hill; lofts in converted warehouses in Shockoe Bottom; and stunning James River views in Union Hill. In addition to a new home for the Richmond Flying Squirrels minor league baseball team, the city's forthcoming Diamond District will sport at least 2,800 residential units, 935,000 square feet of office space and 195,000 square feet of retail and community space, plus an 11-acre park.

Cultural attractions include the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; the



Fishing in
the James
River

Virginia Museum of History & Culture; the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia; the Valentine, a museum of Richmond's history; and the Virginia Holocaust Museum. Downtown, the James River Park System offers access to the Class IV

rapids running through the city and biking and hiking trails. The city is also home to the Richmond Kickers and Richmond Ivy men's and women's soccer teams, and Virginia Commonwealth University and Virginia Union University collegiate teams.



20: Near West End, Westhampton, Tuckahoe

A neighborhood that began in the years between the two world wars, the Near West End is a charming mishmash of architectural styles such as Tudor, Craftsman and Colonial Revival, with River Road's grand homes sited just blocks from cottages.

The University of Richmond is in the middle of it all. On the campus, the Modlin Center for the Arts is a popular venue for concerts, theater and museum exhibits, and E. Claiborne Robins Stadium is home to many Spiders sports. Private K-12 schools in the zone include St. Christopher's and St. Catherine's, as well as the Faison Center for children on the autism spectrum. You'll find plentiful shopping and dining on Libbie, Grove and Patterson avenues; at Willow Lawn shopping center; and at the shopping centers along River Road.

FROM TOP: COURTESY RICHMOND REGION TOURISM; JAY PAUL

30/32: North Side

Families flock to North Side areas such as Brookland Park, Ginter Park, Laburnum Park and Bellevue — as well as Lakeside, officially part of Henrico County — to take advantage of the large yards and exceptional architecture. Long avenues with well-cared-for medians, including some resident-tended gardens, criss-cross the area. Many retirees move here to live in one of three senior communities.

The 262-acre Bryan Park, with its lakes, trails, a 17-acre azalea garden, playing fields and weekly farmers market, is an area mainstay — as is Dot's Back Inn in Bellevue, a kitschy diner beloved by locals well before it was featured on the Food Network's "Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives." Other neighborhood favorites include Ruby Scoops, Stir Crazy Cafe, Hob Nob, SB's Lakeside Love Shack and Little House Green Grocery for both food and local products.

50/60: Manchester, South Side

South of the James yet still in city limits is a mix of industry, arts and neighborhoods. Former factories, warehouses and other historic buildings in Manchester now house lofts, technology companies, eateries and art centers, including Studio Two Three, which offers classes and studio space for artists. Development in the area has exploded in recent years, dominated by apartment buildings, mixed-use projects and office space.

Farther west, you'll find Forest Hill Park and its surrounding neighborhoods, including Woodland Heights and Westover Hills, where residents enjoy easy access to trails and the river. Tucked off Jahnke Road, Powhite Park offers more mountain biking and hiking trails. Several sections of the James River Park System are also in this area, attracting dog walkers, sun worshippers, birdwatchers and mountain bikers.

SURROUNDING AREAS



22/34: Far West End, Glen Allen, Short Pump

The western end of Henrico County is a mix of prestigious suburban communities and sections of smaller, older homes, with the benefit of easy interstate access to downtown Richmond and adjoining counties. Neighborhoods with rolling hills and charming gardens are as common as luxury condos and townhouses. Mixed-use developments such as West Broad Village and GreenGate and, closer to the city, Libbie Mill, combine living, shopping and dining.

In the area between interstates 64 and 295, you'll find new planned communities and high-end shopping centers. The Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen celebrates the visual and performing arts, and the Meadow Farm Museum at Crump Park offers living history with farm animals and more. It's also home to the Hindu Center of Virginia, the Islamic Center of Virginia and the Richmond, Virginia Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. >

Above right:
Short Pump
Town Center;
below:
Forest Hill



FROM TOP RIGHT: COURTESY RICHMOND REGION TOURISM; STEVE HEDBERG

24: Goochland County

Rural life rules in this western county, although development in nearby Short Pump is quickly crossing into Goochland, the second fastest-growing county in Virginia in 2024. Officials spent much of last year discussing plans to accommodate that growth, which included moving forward with a guide to develop the central courthouse area and several infrastructure projects aimed at alleviating rush-hour traffic.

There are charming established neighborhoods near Goochland Courthouse and Tuckahoe Plantation, as well as high-end developments such as Kinloch, on a lake near Route 288, that offer luxe amenities in elegant homes. The east end of the county boasts Capital One's massive campus, the Richmond Academy and the Benedictine Schools of Richmond, Hardywood Park Craft Brewery's West Creek taproom, the Avery Point senior living community and numerous golf and other sporting facilities.

36/39/44: Ashland, Hanover County

Ashland, the self-proclaimed "Center of the Universe" located 15 miles north of Richmond, is a charming railroad town with trains rumbling through the town center dotted with Victorian homes, restaurants and specialty shops. Just off the town's main strip sits Randolph-Macon College. Several museums offer area history and train-related exhibits, while the restored Ashland Theatre presents movies, live music and performances.

Find simple country living to the northwest in Beaverdam or Montpelier, the latter home to a historic district of 19th- and early-20th-century buildings. To the east, Hanover and Mechanicsville boast one of the country's oldest courthouses, Civil War battlefields and Patrick Henry's home, Scotchtown, as well as antiques and regionally famous tomatoes. Hanover Tavern has operated continuously since 1733 and currently acts as a restaurant, pub, theater and events venue, and it offers historic tours and exhibits.



40/42: Eastern Henrico County, Highland Springs, Varina

Past the eastern reaches of Fulton Hill and Oakwood Cemetery, Henrico County embraces the city with a mixture of suburban developments and farmland. Founded in the late 19th century and one of Richmond's original "streetcar suburbs" when electric trolleys were invented a few decades later, Highland Springs is now a tightly

knit community with a small-town feel and a large historic district. Primarily a farming community, Varina offers several historic homes and Civil War sites, including Fort Harrison. A 500-home development, Arcadia West, is expected to begin construction this year. Sandston is known best as the location of Richmond International Airport, although it also hosts the more-than-150-year-old Seven Pines National Cemetery and a charming historic district. Along the river in neighboring Zone 10, Rocketts Landing offers waterfront living and dining, as well as a staging area for events. >

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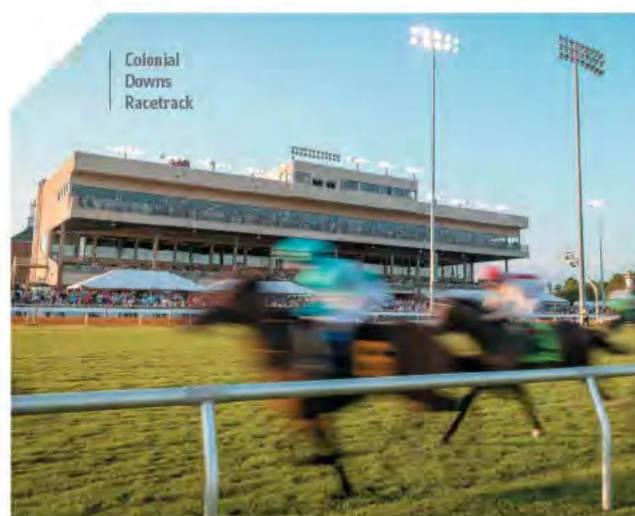
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46: New Kent County

New Kent's location between Richmond and Williamsburg is popular with those who want a quiet country life with nearby amenities; it was the fastest-growing county in Virginia in 2024. In an area dotted with historic structures — including the 300-year-old St. Peter's Church, nicknamed "church of the first first lady" because its rector married Martha Dandridge Curtis to George Washington — new

homes are surprisingly plentiful. Among them, Viniterra is a luxury community centered on New Kent Winery and a Rees Jones-designed golf course.

New Kent is also home to numerous parks and trails, as well as Colonial Downs Racetrack, owned by Kentucky Derby organizer Churchill Downs, which hosts races July through September and a new Derby qualifier in March.



48: Charles City County

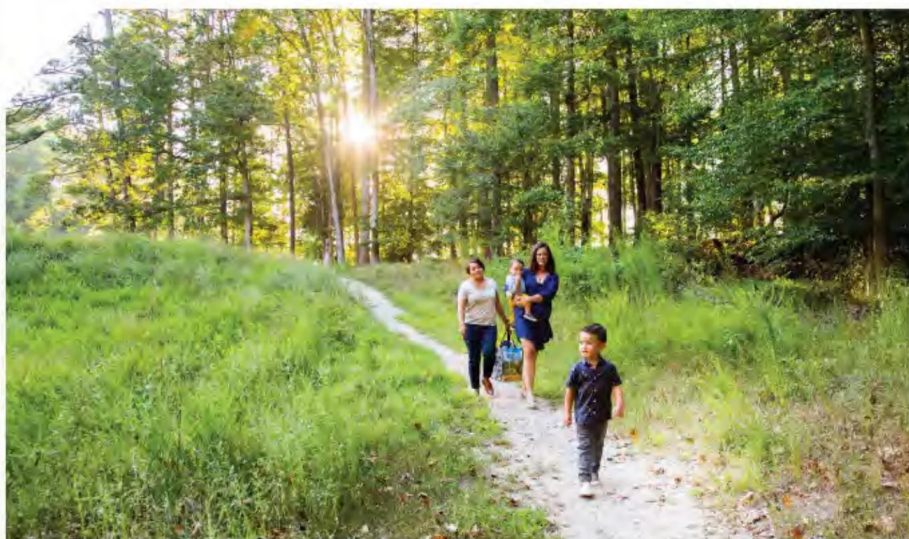
Founded in 1613, Charles City offers a glimpse into Virginia history, with multiple Civil War sites and former plantations along scenic Route 5. Experience the sites at a slower pace along the Virginia Capital Trail; about half of the 52-mile paved cycling and pedestrian path winds through Charles City County. Diascund Creek Reservoir and the Chickahominy River provide peaceful fishing and boating opportunities, and Upper Shirley Vineyards offers bistro-style dining and wine tasting with waterfront views. While homes for sale are rare in the county, undeveloped land is plentiful.

Above left:
Upper
Shirley
Vineyards;
below:
Pocahontas
State Park

52/54: Chesterfield County

Despite adding some 25,000 residents since 2020, Chesterfield County is still largely rural and developing, with housing and retail clustered around the Route 10 and 360 corridors leading from Richmond's South Side neighborhood. Once off those major arteries, winding rural roads veer off into the woods; planned

Chesterfield County communities take advantage of the trees and rolling hills. Destinations like Chester Village, an old railroad town just west of Interstate 95, serve as the heart for neighborhoods filled with single-family Colonial Revival- and ranch-style homes. The county has done well in recent years to attract major industry, including Lego's first U.S. manufacturing plant, while maintaining a rural charm, best seen in the county's central Pocahontas State Park. >



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY COLONIALDOWNS; BIG ORANGE FRAME: COURTESY UPPER SHIRLEY VINEYARDS



HOPEWELL

Located a short drive or boat ride from Richmond, come **Discover Hopewell**. Hopewell has been a waterfront destination since 1613. Located at the convergence of the James and Appomattox Rivers. Your adventure begins hiking the ½ mile long **Hopewell Riverwalk** at **City Park** before settling into a kayak to explore the flat water of the Appomattox and James Rivers. Fishing piers are open daily at **Hopewell City Marina**, and **Old City Point Waterfront Park**. Stroll historic **Downtown**, **Appomattox Manor** and **Weston Manor**. Enjoy fine waterfront dining and dessert before taking in a show at the **Beacon Theatre**.

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Discover
Hopewell

Discover Hopewell, Virginia located just 20 minutes south of Richmond at the convergence of the James and Appomattox Rivers. Come take in a show at the historic Beacon Theater. Explore the water on foot or kayak at the Hopewell Riverwalk. Visit historic Weston Manor and Appomattox Manor to walk in the footprints of the nation's founders. Enjoy drinks and dinner on the deck of the Boathouse at City Point overlooking the James River.





55/56/57: Tri-Cities – Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Petersburg

Forty minutes south of Richmond along the Appomattox River, Tri-Cities is a historic area with its eyes on the future. A burgeoning hub for pharmaceutical manufacturing, the region is also expanding its entertainment options: Last fall residents voted to approve Live! Casino & Hotel Virginia, with construction expected to begin this year.

Now anchored by the renovated Hotel Petersburg, opened in December, Old Towne Petersburg is home to an array of restaurants, boutiques and historical activities.

Situated at the confluence of the James and Appomattox rivers, the city of Hopewell has a family-oriented charm and offers numerous outdoor sports opportunities and waterfront attractions, including Hopewell Riverwalk and the James River National Wildlife Refuge. Just off Interstate 95, Colonial Heights is the retail core of the region; Southpark Mall, Park South Shopping Center and Dimmock Square offer retail outlets, boutiques, eateries and professional services.

62: Midlothian

Midlothian offers suburban ease, planned-community convenience or a rural lifestyle, although much of the western reaches of the area are quickly changing from farmland and forests to new developments. Home styles vary across neighborhoods in Midlothian, from mostly single-family Craftsman- and Colonial Revival-style homes in Brandermill and Woodlake to more traditional styles elsewhere, as well as contemporary apartments and townhomes in more urban areas.

One of the largest projects is Springline at District 60, currently under construction on Midlothian Turnpike. Described as a “mixed-use urban village,” it will feature 1,200 residential units, 420,000 square feet of office and retail space, two hotels, a conference center, and several sports and entertainment venues when completed.

Despite the intense growth, out-



Swift Creek
Reservoir

door space is still one of the area’s major selling points. Hiking trails around the Swift Creek Reservoir offer water access, and Mid-Lothian

Mines Park is built on the remnants of the 18th-century coal mine that would later create the community around it. >



JAMESTOWN SETTLEMENT AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION MUSEUM AT YORKTOWN

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VIRGINIA'S MUST-SEE MUSEUMS



JAMESTOWN SETTLEMENT



AMERICAN REVOLUTION MUSEUM AT YORKTOWN



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64: Bon Air

Abutting the western edge of the city, this area rolls along the James River to the border with Powhatan County. Single-family homes on wooded lots dominate, and long-standing neighborhoods such as Salisbury continue to attract newcomers. The Highland Hills neighborhood in Bon Air was developed in the 1950s and features midcentury modern homes designed by Washington, D.C., architect Charles

Goodman.

Shopping destinations include Westchester Commons and Chesterfield Towne Center, along with a vast stretch of additional retail options along Midlothian Turnpike. The area boasts several golf courses, public and private, and Robious Landing Park offers access to the James River for those looking to kayak, canoe, row or paddleboard.



66: Powhatan

Just west of Richmond, Powhatan County is largely rural, with acres of farms and white fences meandering along rolling horse pastures. New construction is common, with many of the homes placed on generous wooded lots.

The county is home to the 1,500-acre Powhatan State Park, which boasts about 2.5 miles of riverfront along the James, and the 13,741-square-foot Powhatan Ice Den, which supports programs for skaters of all ages. It also offers great options for antiques and collectibles, including the family-owned Vintage Antique Shack, which celebrates its eighth anniversary this fall. There are also some unexpected shopping choices, such as Fine Creek Provisions and Fine Creek Brewing Co. at The Mill at Fine Creek. In October, the Powhatan Festival of the Grape lures wine enthusiasts to the village to sample sips from two dozen craft beverage purveyors and shop nearly 100 food and craft vendors. ■

FROM TOP: JAY PAUL; COURTESY FINE CREEK BREWING



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DINING

RVA Dine Vision Board

FIVE LOCAL PROS SHARE THEIR PREDICTIONS FOR THE RICHMOND FOOD AND BEVERAGE SCENE IN 2025

BY EILEEN MELLON



(from top)
Justin Lo;
Kendra Feather

JUSTIN LO

Occupation: Dining critic for the Richmond Times-Dispatch, lawyer

Time at position: Six years

Goals for food and restaurant criticism in 2025: More voices and a greater diversity of voices. It'd be awesome if we could get our food writing ranks back to pre-pandemic levels, when there were multiple critics actively writing for multiple outlets. But that, of course, requires a greater investment in local journalism.

Goals for Richmond's food and beverage scene in 2025: Innovation, not imitation. Stop trying to be New York or D.C. We're Richmond, Virginia. Let's make it our own — and get back to picking up those James Beard nods again!

Biggest issues affecting restaurants leading into 2025: The rise of developer-driven dining. With an increasing number of restaurant openings in mixed-use apartments and other big construction projects, are we unwittingly ceding creative control to commercial developers? The last thing I want to see is another [chain] or ill-conceived food hall. The best thing about independent restaurants is that they're independent.

Innovation you'd like to see adopted by the industry: Hybrid concepts that offer dining by night, something else by day — whether it's a wine store-restaurant (like Celladora or Penny's) or a furniture store-restaurant (like Stock). I also love the idea of restaurants being integrated into unconventional spaces.

Industry predictions for 2025: No predictions from me, just the persistent hope that Richmond dining will continue to surprise and delight us (and that we'll finally get a first-rate sushi spot).

KENDRA FEATHER

Occupation: Co-owner of Garnett's, Laura Lee's and The Roosevelt

Time at position: 26 years

Goals for your restaurants in 2025: With so much uncertainty, the biggest thing is to stay open and keep on doing what we do. Since coming out of COVID, I've found a renewed love and appreciation of being a part of the communities around our restaurants — the neighborhoods, our staff, our customers, all of it. My personal goal is to really enjoy the small moments that make up daily life of running restaurants, keep my head down and stay in the moment, do right by the people around me.

Goals for Richmond's food and beverage scene in 2025: I hope we can all do OK and hang in there. I hope that the next generation of folks can find their footing. It would also be great to see some of the local talent get more broad recognition.

Biggest issues affecting restaurants leading into 2025: Uncertainty around the larger economic and political forces is really unnerving. Is everything going to get super expensive? Is our staff going to be able to find affordable housing?

Innovation you'd like to see adopted by the industry: Looking forward to seeing >

LEFT: COURTESY JUSTIN LO; COURTESY KENDRA FEATHER; ILLUSTRATION BY CARSON MCNAMARA



what other folks might say about this. **Industry predictions for 2025:** I have no clue. All I know is our little world and a few other folks, and the “restaurant industry” feels like something else big out there that isn’t us.

CHRIS TSUI

Occupation: Owner of Eat Restaurant Partners

Time at position: 23 years

Goals for your restaurant group in 2025: Complete several projects such as Wong’s Tacos in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Hanover, as well as Lucky AF on Forest Hill, plus the reopening of Boulevard Burger & Brew. We are also doing an Italian concept with chef Kevin LaCivita called Civita Italia.

Goals for Richmond’s food and beverage scene in 2025: I would love to see the chefs around Richmond gain more recognition [nationally].

Biggest issues affecting restaurants leading into 2025: The threat of inflation.

Innovation you’d like to see adopted by the industry: I’d like to see how artificial intelligence will help, and I’m interested to see what it can do.



(clockwise from right)
Chris Tsui; Beth Dixon;
Shemicia Bowen



Industry predictions for 2025: 100% business tax deductions on meals, from the current 50%.

SHEMICIA “MIMI” BOWEN

Occupation: Co-founder and managing partner of Virginia Black Restaurant Experience, previously Richmond Black Restaurant Experience

Time at position: Nine years

Goals for VBRE in 2025: We love Richmond and are deeply rooted in the capital and birthplace of Black entrepreneurship. In 2025, we plan to add a second [restaurant experience] week in the fall. This expansion will provide more opportunities to amplify and promote our participants and their brands while becoming more inclusive.

Goals for Richmond’s food and beverage scene in 2025: We encourage Richmonders to invite their friends from other places; tour the city; prioritize nonchain, nonfranchised restaurants; and explore options that infuse culture and flavors from the Caribbean and African diasporas.

Biggest issues affecting food businesses leading into 2025: Our participants tell us hiring and staff retention remain high priorities. Managing the increasing costs of food and products while staying profitable without significantly raising customer prices is also a major challenge. Additionally, non-brick-and-mortar culinary experts face difficulties due to the lack of food preparation and storage spaces.

Innovation you’d like to see adopted by the industry: We envision the fusion of automation and technology with the use of AI for marketing and administrative support, robotic assistance in back-of-house operations, and maintaining excellent human-centered service in front-of-house settings.

BETH DIXON

Occupation: Owner/bartender at Salt and Acid, a cocktail catering and consulting business

“My personal goal is to really enjoy the small moments that make up daily life of running restaurants.”

KENDRA FEATHER, CO-OWNER
OF GARNETT’S, LAURA LEE’S
AND THE ROOSEVELT

Time at position: Four years

Goal for your beverage business in 2025:

We just moved into our storefront space at 120 W. Brookland Park Blvd. We hope to host events and seasonal retail pop-ups with home decor, cocktail making kits, bar tools and more.

Goals for Richmond’s food and beverage scene in 2025: I would love to see more focus on hospitality and perfecting simple cocktails with fresh and house-made ingredients vs. trying to reinvent the wheel.

Biggest issues affecting the beverage industry leading into 2025: Post-COVID costs, hiring talent with experience, mental health and the sober movement (a positive impact, but an impact nonetheless).

Innovation you’d like to see adopted by the industry: Not really an innovation per se, but more education and training.

Industry predictions for 2025: It’s going to get weird, and guests will be more open to it. Thanks to social media, people are more curious about unique ingredients and unexpected concoctions. Expect to see more umami and savory cocktails and olives in everything. ■

These interviews have been edited for length and clarity.

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

OUR STORY



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SMALL TOUCHES

From thoughtfully chosen tunes to elegant glassware, the dining details add up **BY GENEVELYN STEELE**

Beloved restaurants exude an aura: a fundamental essence that promises not only a stellar meal, but an emotional response to it. Fulfillment is coaxed out of the diner through expertly prepared food and drink, yes, but acts of being tended to — even swept away to another place — come into play. In these scenarios, thoughtfully staged creature comforts, such as lighting, tableware, comfortable seating and a curated soundtrack, are imbued into their X factor, sometimes so skillfully that guests don't even notice.

At **Adarra**, the anticipation of what's to come is palpable before you cross its Oregon Hill threshold. Randall and Lyne Doetzer invested heavily in buying and upgrading the building that formerly housed Mamma Zu, one of the most cherished restaurants in Richmond.

"I loved Mamma Zu," Randall says. "Lyne grew up eating here. Changing things [during renovation] was challenging because we know how much Mamma Zu meant to people, what it meant to us. We changed everything with the thought of making the restaurant our own, and we wanted to make Adarra as comfortable as possible."

One of the Doetzers' passions is collecting organic wines from small producers. Storing treasured bottles correctly is the *raison d'être* of Adarra's temperature-controlled wine room. Maintaining cellar temperature and humidity levels is key to preserving a wine's nuances, but the wineglass is crucial to elevating its taste — one with a clear, broad, but light bowl that exposes the liquid to air and a thin rim to push a vintage's esters toward the



Colorful glasses and specific cutlery were chosen with intention at Celladora.

nose. Sipping becomes the magic carpet ride that jimmies the genie out of the bottle, maximizing flavors and aromas. For this, the Doetzers chose two types of glassware: the German crystal Spiegelau for wines by the glass and Rona Slovak for bottle service.

"It just feels great in your hand," Lyne says of the latter. "Breakage is minimal, and look at the rim — it's barely there."

Both glasses are scratch- and cloud-resistant after thousands of rounds in the dishwasher, preventing off aromas from lingering in the crystal.

Walking with glass in hand to Adarra's dining room, Lyne nestles into a banquette seat. "Check out the lumbar support. It feels so good," she says, patting the bench while pressing her back against the booth. "We searched for

comfortable seating that could stand up to a high volume without staining or cracking. I think we found it."

Sometimes a perfect fit can be purchased, other times it's made. At **Celladora Wines**, a 14-seat, 300-square-foot (excluding the kitchen) wine bar in the Fan, owner Megan Lee Hopkins designed the bistro's tables with her father.

"I wanted tables on wheels that were easily moveable without looking unwieldy," Hopkins explains. "They move silently. We can completely change this dining room for larger groups effortlessly, on the spot, with only one person."

The design required trial and error. "Initially the tables were bar height," Hopkins says. "We wanted a fun drinking vibe. But that wasn't comfortable



FROM LEFT: JUSTIN CHESNEY; EILEEN MELLON; ABIGAIL GREY JOHNSTON



Left: Lighting inside Pink Room was key to the restaurant's design.
Right: David Shannon's art history degree plays into L'Opossum's blueprint.



for snacking, so we dropped them down to counter height."

Hopkins also has an eye for dressing a table. Her wineglasses are light, with thinly rolled rims, while the shorter, heavier water glasses are multicolored, adding whimsy to Celladora's table settings.

"Water glasses are different colors — green, purple — so that guests know which glass is theirs. Once a table is covered with glasses and shared plates, it can be hard to tell. Same for our napkins, which are Indian cotton, rather than restaurant service polyester blends, which are linty. These feel good against your lips."

She also went with hefty cutlery, chosen for its artisanal look and because it doesn't retain fingerprints. Each place setting comes with a sil-

verware rest, a feature more typically seen in Japanese restaurants. Hand-made, they keep Celladora's granite tabletops cleaner and prevent the cutlery from coming into contact with frequently touched surfaces.

Hopkins says, "I got the idea from small dinner parties, sharing food."

Intimacy drives the design of chef and restaurateur Brittanny Anderson's **Pink Room**, a studio-apartment-turned-'90s-house-party cocktail lounge attached to Metzger Bar & Butchery. Interior designers and Metzger customers Nolan Beck Rivera and Cameron Billinghamurst of Studio Tarea worked with Anderson to bring her vision into a workable restaurant space. Lighting plays a starring role.

"She wanted Pink Room to feel like she was having friends over for dinner, cooking from her own kitchen and mixing drinks with them," Billinghamurst says. "It was a cool, design-driven hangout space that felt like a statement."

Rivera and Billinghamurst coalesced the apartment into a restaurant that doesn't quite feel like one, with easy-on-the-eyes lighting. The designers chose warmer temperatures in the 2700K range — similar to the lighting used in a family room at home — rather than a cooler temperature such as 5500K, which is often found in retail and veers into bluish undertones. Incandescent lights at Pink Room are hooked to Wi-Fi and are adjustable via switch or phone. The pink "service" lights make the room feel more like a party, Billinghamurst says, while the cooler "house lights" are bright so staff can clean up.

"We didn't want to disguise that this space is a studio apartment, so we concentrated on reflectivity so that the furniture didn't suck up the space," he adds. "We lighted what we wanted the guest to look at, the artwork on the ceiling."

Enclosed by sconces, beams of

pink light become arrows pointing upward, flattering guests with indirect lighting. Another focus area is the shelf lighting in the prep area. Looking into the restaurant from the sidewalk, it makes the room glow pink, a pearlized view through rose-colored glasses of guests sipping cocktails.

A rosy view of another era (specifically the 1970s) is what proprietor David Shannon delivers at **L'Opossum**, known for its over-the-top decor sashaying into last-century pop culture. An art history major, Shannon has built layers of details throughout the room. Easter eggs abound, from the Warhol-printed bar top to the Villeroy & Boch chop plates, each year sporting a different design from the James Beard House, a prestigious venue where Shannon has cooked.

Subtlety is the name of the game for the restaurant's soundtrack, chosen by Shannon. "It's music I might listen to in the car, from the '60s to present day, but tweaked so there isn't too much trumpet or horn," Shannon says. "I set the playlist up sequentially, progressing from the beginning of a meal to the end of one. I play about six different covers of 'Long Black Veil.' Nick Cave does the most slow and mournful one, while The Kingston Trio does a fast, happy, upbeat version. It's a song everyone knows and likes without realizing the sadness in it. The covers tap into a nostalgic vibe. After all, Beef 'Wellington' [L'Opossum's most-ordered main] is a cover of beef Wellington." ■

GRAPE POTENTIAL

An incubator program supports a new class of winemakers **BY DIANE C. MARTIN**

Lance Lemon, co-owner of Penny's Wine Shop in Jackson Ward, and Reggie Leonard, VinePair's 2024 Advocate of the Year, have held many roles in the wine world, from slinging bottles at retail shops to organizing inclusive festivals such as Virginia's Two Up Wine Down. But there is yet another part they have been aiming to play: winemaker.

The duo recently released two wines under their own label, Parallax Project, which they created as the first participants in an innovative winery incubator program through Waynesboro's Common Wealth Crush Co.

Wine, like many pursuits that walk the line between craft and art, can be a vehicle for self-expression. Funding this type of expression can be challenging, and achieving success can take even longer. Common Wealth Crush, established in 2022, is aiming to change that.

The group, founded by Ben Jordan (formerly of Early Mountain Vineyards and a winemaker at Lightwell Survey Wines), Tim Jordan and Pat Eagan, works closely with up-and-coming winemakers to create custom crush projects. Through the newly launched incubator program, they provide funding, equipment and mentorship. Their goal is for new winemakers to have a platform to push the boundaries of what's possible for Virginia wine.

When asked what the interests of his novice winemakers might reveal about the future of wine in Virginia, Jordan says, "Every single project so far has been keyed into this East Coast renaissance that wine can be different than Europe or California, and the



Lance Lemon (left) and Reggie Leonard of Parallax Project

East Coast can have its own identity."

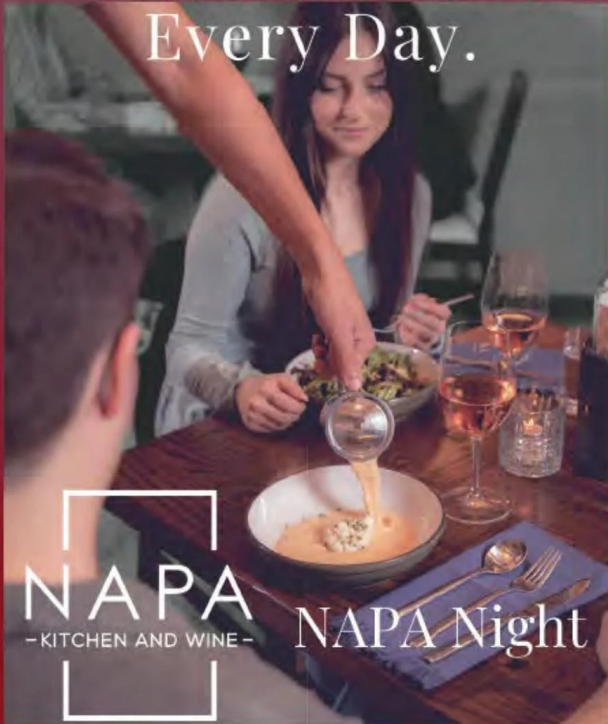
While Leonard and Lemon had previously interacted with the Common Wealth Crush team, they were first introduced by a mutual friend, Lemon's business partner, Kristen Gardner Beal. Leonard says that when he looked up Lemon online, he thought, "I want to meet him — I don't know any other Black guys in wine."

A Hanover native, Lemon has a more traditional wine background,

with years of experience in hospitality, sales and wine retail in both New York and Virginia, while native Marylander Leonard began as an enthusiast, finding community through wine tastings at Market Street Wine in Charlottesville.

In early 2022, the Common Wealth Crush team invited Lemon and Leonard to provide input on the incubator program. What began as a sit-down eventually turned into an invitation. >

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Leonard says, “After this 2 1/2-hour meeting, they were like, ‘Great, it sounds like you all are the demographic [we’re looking for for the incubator project], so, are y’all going to make wine for us?’ Lance and I both looked at each other, and we were like, ‘Yeah!’”

The founders of Common Wealth Crush knew there was untapped potential in the state and people passionate about offering a unique view on Virginia wine. Their desire to eliminate the financial barrier for fresh voices became the inspiration for the incubator program.

Sourcing fruit from Walsh Family Wine in Loudoun County, Lemon says, “We knew that we wanted to make wines that were serious, but seriously enjoyable ... and we knew we wanted to make a white and a red using the same grapes.”

That idea of duality was the inspiration for their label’s name, Parallax, which is a phenomenon where an object can look different depending on the perspective from which it’s viewed; their wines show different expressions of the same grapes from different winemaking methods. Both wines are blends of vidal blanc, chardonnay and tannat, with small amounts of petit manseng, traminette and albarino. What’s This is a textured white with a pop of tangy grilled pineapple on the finish, while What’s That is a fresh yet bold red. The names of the wines are inspired by “New Thangs,” a song by Curren\$y, Freddie Gibbs and The Alchemist.

Of the winemaking process, Lemon says, “Reggie and I really wanted to make the wine and be part of the process. We wanted to pick our fruit. We wanted to press, we wanted to taste, we wanted to make decisions based on what the wine tastes like.”

Lemon adds with a laugh, “There were so many times we’d be talking through decisions with Ben [Jordan], and we’d be like, ‘Ben, we don’t know



what to do. We don’t know what to do! Just tell us what to do!’ But it made us think a little bit.”

In his role as agricultural adviser, wine guru and mentor, Jordan recognizes the need to stay flexible with the future of the program.

“The constant is, there is a relatively large subsidy on the winemaking cost or the facility use, especially in the first year and even subsequent years, and then if desired, basically as much mentorship as is wanted, and that’s where it’s catered to the individual project,” he says.

He adds, “We sit down and talk to them about how they want to get to the point of selling their wine and work backwards in terms of how it’s made and how it’s introduced to the market.” This is especially important as some incubator participants live as far away as the Washington, D.C., area and New York.

This year, Leonard and Lemon will be releasing 2024 vintages of both

The two current releases from Parallax Project

wines — similar in style, but with a few variations, including sourcing fruit from Grace Estate Winery in Crozet.

“They’re using biodynamic practices in their vineyards, and they’re being very thoughtful about the way they’re growing their grapes,” Leonard says. “Their grapes come at a slight premium because of that quality, and we want to make sure they know that there’s a commercial market for that.”

The Parallax Project founders also have plans to sell their wines more widely — this is often a challenge for new winemakers given the United States’ byzantine, three-tier distribution system for alcohol. But for now, you can find What’s This and What’s That at Penny’s Wine Shop, Common Wealth Crush Co. and Market Street Wine in Charlottesville, as well as a few other small retailers. Time and future vintages will tell if they and the other Common Wealth Crush incubator alumni can show wine lovers what’s possible in Virginia winemaking. ■



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BUILT TO LAST

50 years of Bamboo Cafe, Richmond's quintessential neighborhood bar **BY EILEEN MELLON**

For 50 years, amid development, industry innovation and a vanishing yet beloved neighborhood bar culture, Bamboo Cafe — on the corner of West Main and Mulberry streets in the Fan — has stayed true to its identity as a community hub, uninfluenced by the outside world. At any hour, patrons can be seen blissfully tucked into tight wooden booths, their elbows and knees grazing those of their companions while sipping strong drinks under the tin roof without a care in the world.

It is a place of routine, where worries can be curbed by a stiff pour and a familiar face. Longtime Bamboo Cafe customer Jim Bandeleon, 81, has been frequenting 1 S. Mulberry St. since it was Mulberry Tavern in the

Above left: Bamboo Cafe opened in 1974. Right: An old menu from when Bamboo first debuted

early 1970s. Though he moved to the West End a few years ago, making trips to his favorite place less frequent, Bandeleon says matter-of-factly, "Oh, but I still get down to the 'Boo."

Every Sunday, Bandeleian and his wife, Despa, and a group of a few dozen others congregate outside, waiting for the doors to open at 10:30 a.m. Brunch begins with a click of the lock, followed by a frenzy of friendly hugs. The bartender on duty lines the well with tall glasses in preparation for the incoming bloody mary brigade.

Much like the establishment he loves, Bandelean's usual — bourbon and ginger with a slice of lime — is timeless. At the sight of him, and most of their regulars, the Bamboo crew know what to reach for; they are masters in the art of silent service.

"They would have the drink on the bar when they saw me crossing the street," Bandeleian says fondly.

That sort of unspoken hospitality is treasured, almost a lost art. As Richmond navigates change, Bamboo stays the same, and slogans from patrons like, "Make your own family here" and "We come alone to get together" capture its spirit.

THE 'PLACE TO GO'

The story of Bamboo Cafe — its name a nod to Bambú rolling papers — starts in 1974 with the original owners, husband and wife Diane and Jim Bandette. The space previously housed the Mulberry Tavern and in its earliest iteration was a drug store.

While the Bandettes may have gotten the party started, they cut ties

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: COURTESY HUNTER ARMSTRONG; THE VALENTINE; JAY PAUL; COURTESY HUNTER ARMSTRONG; JAY PAUL; COURTESY ANNE BUCCI; COURTESY HUNTER ARMSTRONG



with Bamboo Cafe just a few years later.

Jay Barrows, now an art dealer and curator, moved to Richmond in 1970 to attend Virginia Commonwealth University. During grad school, he lived on Monument Avenue and was a caretaker for Richmond philanthropists Sydney and Frances Lewis.

Back then, Barrows says, "Nobody, nothing was on Main Street. [The Bandettes] took a chance and opened this place. I heard about it, and I came."

The week that Bamboo Cafe opened, Barrows plopped down on a bar stool and struck up a conversation with some fellow patrons. Like many others since, he quickly made a friend.

"It became like my place to go," Barrows says.

It eventually became his first wife Becky's place to go, too. She worked as a secretary at The Fulton School (now art studios and the restaurant Blue Atlas) and waited tables at The Robin Inn before landing at Bamboo Cafe in 1975.

Clockwise from top left: Painting of Bamboo Cafe by Elizabeth Evans; former Bamboo Cafe cook Billy Pittman at a Christmas party; longtime server and bartender Elizabeth Evans; orange t-shirt designed by Carole Pelfrey from the late 80s; crew out front featuring Cindy George Loving, Pieter Borman, Billy Pittman, the late Ron Jock and Adrienne LaPrade

Shortly after she started, the Bandettes sold the restaurant. It was then taken over by John Anderson and Gary Morgan, but not long after, Anderson decided to sell his stake.

Barrows says, "Becky came home — she's 25, I'm 26 years old — and she says, 'Are you interested in buying half of the Bamboo?' And I went, 'Well, we can look into it.'"

On May 19, 1977, the couple purchased their part of what would become one of Richmond's most cherished places for \$18,000. It would also mark Bamboo Cafe's shift into a true neighborhood bar.

Though business was booming, Barrows saw an opportunity to take things up a notch. In 1978, he and Becky applied for a liquor license and learned that there were a few hurdles to overcome: They needed to have 45 table seats and no more than eight seats at the bar. The couple hired a lawyer, called on a friend who was a carpenter and spent \$10,000 on renovations.

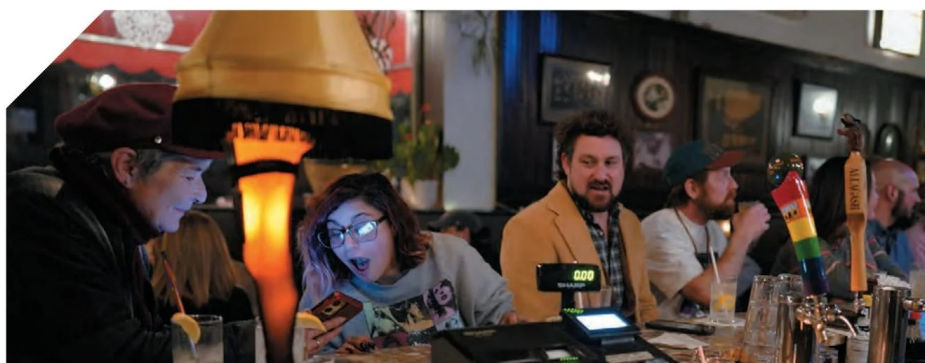
"We took every square inch of this place and added enough seats to make it 45," Barrows says. "The back two seats are called the judge's chamber, it used to be a furnace; we took it out, and those were our last two seats."

There was a certification and court hearing, and it was all a "pretty big deal."

"We kept thinking, all right, it's going to be worth it, it's going to be worth it," Barrows says. "And we made it happen. We were suddenly the bar that everybody that worked in bars and restaurants went to."

In the early days, the menu featured "munchies" including peanuts in the shell and onion rings, "piping hot pizzas," and a triple-decker club sandwich, still a Bamboo classic, for \$2.25. There was also chili in the winter — a favorite of Barrows' — and gazpacho in the summer.

They kept the lights on until 2 a.m., and post-midnight, it was a gathering place for those in the biz seeking a post-shift balm after untying their >



*"When you come in, if you're by yourself, **you know somebody.** It's almost **like a party** for people."*

ELIZABETH EVANS,
BARTENDER AND SERVER

employee in the 1990s; when she relocated from a stint living in California.

"I came in to say hi when I got back into town, and it was a Friday night around 6:30, and they said, 'Hey, we need someone to work, would you be interested?' I've been here ever since," she says.

That was 30 years ago. "I just loved it so much as a customer. I don't know, it just feels so comfortable. When you come in, if you're by yourself, you know somebody. It's almost like a party for people."

Bamboo Cafe has attracted all walks of life, from beatniks and punks to artists and gigging musicians to nearby neighbors, restaurant workers and everyone in between. It has also been the stomping grounds for a number of successful restaurateurs who followed similar stick-with-it paths and went on to introduce some of Richmond's favorite eateries — among them, Manny Mendez of Kuba Kuba, Sam George of Cafe Rustika and Paul Keevil of Millie's.

In 1985, the 'Boo went Hollywood for the HBO film "Finnegan Begin Again," posing as an ice cream shop, harkening back to the space's origin as a corner drugstore and malt shop.

Though Bamboo Cafe welcomes all, you almost have to know someone to secure a job there. General Manager

Clockwise from top: Patrons at the bar; bartender Chrissie Lozano; cook Noel Hornung, who has been at Bamboo Cafe for 26 years, in the kitchen with Anne Veillette

aprons. A record player loudly spun rock 'n' roll, and if you brought in vinyl, it would happily be played. Bamboo earned a reputation as the smokiest joint in town with the latest last call. It was cash or check only, and to its customers, it was simply the best.

The camaraderie transcended to softball tournaments and lively Christmas parties. When they upped the price of beer by 10 cents, Barrows recalls one regular exclaiming, "Now I can't get two beers for \$1!" There were also frequent visits from the police and the ABC board, but it always brought people together, he says.

"We always said we wanted it to be a place that you came to three or four times a week as a neighborhood place, but the food was always good," Barrows says.

Barrows balanced working for the Lewises and Bamboo Cafe. "Gary [Morgan] and Becky and I, we were good partners; we loved doing it. And I'll say, you cannot be an absentee

owner in a small restaurant," he adds.

But they eventually ran out of gas. With the Barrowses contending with their own relationship woes and Morgan ready to exit the business, the trio sold the restaurant and parted ways with Bamboo Cafe in October 1982 in a decision that felt simultaneously right and bittersweet.

"We built something that had a pretty great reputation," Barrows says.

COME AS YOU ARE

Martin "Marty" White took over the bar and restaurant in 1982. When White died of cancer in 2004, his wife, Adrienne LaPrade — a fixture at Bamboo Cafe since 1980 — assumed ownership. "I just kind of inherited it," she says. "I've done everything here except cook; I'm too short [for that]."

The cast of characters at Bamboo Cafe has remained incredibly consistent since then. Regulars will recognize Elizabeth Evans, who frequented the bar for a decade before becoming an

Mariam Farrell has a Bamboo bloodline. Her uncle, two brothers and three sisters all did their time there. Farrell says she got suckered into covering a shift for her pregnant sister over two decades ago and has kept with it. Her sister Andrea O'Hare works with her still and has since 1998.

There is also Chrissie Lozano, a 22-year employee and singer in the band Piranha Rama. When she relocated to Richmond and was looking for a job, she says, "Somebody told me to come up to Richmond and go into Mamma Zu and talk to Ed [Vasaio] and then come to Bamboo Cafe and talk to Adrienne. I came up on a Sunday, and Mamma Zu was closed."

Her fate was sealed.

In the kitchen, chef Noel Hornung cranks out consistently reliable eats. He's the child of Bamboo regulars and grew up in the booths there. His mother, Carol, tended bar at Bamboo.

"When people were coming by this year, like for the 50th, one thing ev-

erybody said, 'I haven't been here in 10 years, I haven't been here in 15 years, and it's exactly the same, that's something that I think is wonderful about the 'Boo,' Farrell says.

Crew members bring up stories of longtime patrons including Arlington "Lee" Huband Jr., who had a reserved seat at the end of the bar that he called "the apex of the universe." A retired Richmond firefighter, Huband was noted in his obituary as having "many adoring 'rascals and stinkers' and other loving friends at the Bamboo Cafe."

Huband always remembered birthdays, gave toys around Christmas and was part of the fabric of the restaurant.

Farrell says, "When I became pregnant with my son, he took pictures of me like twice a week, and then he ended up making a little photo album for me and a bunch of little collages and gave it to me after I had my son. That's something that's very dear to me."

Evans says, "There's certain people that touch you. You got regular custom-

ers that come every Friday to see me. I mean, they just, they love Bamboo, and they love me, so it warms my heart."

In 2019, Bamboo Cafe won Richmond magazine's Elby Award for Neighborhood Anchor Restaurant, recognizing an establishment that has consistently provided high-quality food and service and has served as a community hub.

The COVID-19 pandemic may have been the business' greatest test to date, but they navigated it with poise. Red velvet and gold-accented ropes created an extended dining space outside, and when customers exited the cafe to smoke a cigarette, bartenders wiped the door handle behind them. There was even a wedding.

"A couple got married here during the pandemic, just out front, because this is their favorite place," LaPrade says. "It's not a moneymaking place, and it's not a place that you could put anywhere else. No, this is it, this is the building. This is what has all the memories and the people in it."

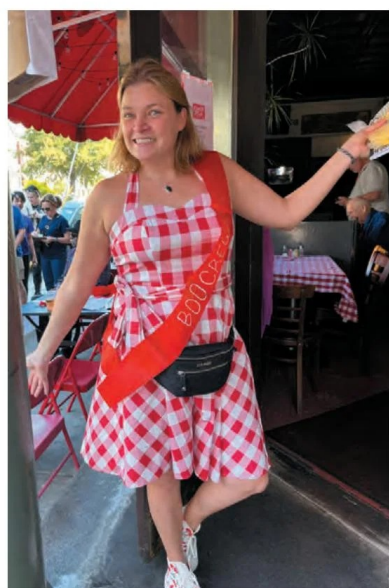
During the bar's 50th anniversary block party last October, patrons flooded the streets and clanked cups under the red canopies. People who hadn't seen each other since their last exchange at the bar happily reminisced about their home away from home.

While there are some newer faces working there today, the bar shuts down at midnight during the week, and perhaps it hasn't quite returned to its raucous pre-pandemic days, Bamboo Cafe remains a revered neighborhood staple.

The bar is a reflection of Richmond, mirroring the people who inhabit it. From first dates to proposals, Tuesday nights to midday hangs, it's a place to pop in and stay a while, a place for life moments both everyday and big — a balance that can't be re-created. The 'Boo transports just by being itself.

"It really is generational. The crazy little hole in the wall serving pub food has made its mark on many," Barrows says. "It's maintained its identity, and it's a mainstay that has a purpose." ■

Clockwise from top left: Interior of Bamboo Cafe; exterior night shot with regular Lee Huband Jr. perched at his usual spot; a band, aka the kitchen staff, during a Christmas party; Mariam Farrell at the Bamboo Cafe 50th anniversary party





Golden Skillet sign in Sandston

A CRISPY DYNASTY

Looking back on the heyday of a Richmond fried chicken phenom **BY STEPHANIE GANZ**

Driving around Richmond and its surrounding counties, you may notice a certain type of signage — a big circle, several feet in diameter with a long handle jutting out that resembles a skillet. To the untrained eye, it may appear to be another fast-food advertisement, but if you know what you're looking at, it's an unmistakable artifact of Richmond's culinary history.

Folks who have lived here since a certain chain's heyday will recognize the nostalgic logo and dark brown swooping script as Golden Skillet, a Richmond-born fried chicken fast-food chain. Today, there are only a

few local locations remaining. But before Golden Skillet faded to a dim glimmer, travelers worldwide flocked to the gleaming concept that grew to over 200 outposts.

The story of Golden Skillet is really the story of its late founder, Richmond native Clifton William ("C.W.") Guthrie Sr., a born salesman with a knack for business and a secret recipe for killer fried chicken. Guthrie's granddaughter, Mary Beth Castanien, says, "He could sell you anything, and he would."

Before finding success in business, Guthrie raised chickens on his family farm in Halifax County. He tried his

hand at tobacco farming and worked in a silk mill before studying business at a night school in Petersburg. Still searching for his calling, Guthrie entered the insurance business in 1931, the same year he married his beloved wife, Mary Brown.

Throughout his early career, Guthrie never stopped tinkering with an undisclosed recipe for his favorite food: fried chicken. When he became a traveling rep for an outdoor lighting manufacturer after World War II, Guthrie took his recipe on the road, always toting along all the ingredients and equipment he needed to fry up a batch. He would ask his clients if he could make them some fried chicken, and they almost always said yes.

Guthrie had a hunch he was onto something, not just with his batter and breading recipe, but also his cooking method, which used a pressure cooker to fry the chicken in under half the time of a typical fryer. The proprietary design, patented by Guthrie in the 1960s, became an integral factor in Golden Skillet's growth into a worldwide franchise. But before all that, it was just Guthrie and his pressure cooker in a back room.

It was in one such back room, at the now-shuttered Richmond-born department store Thalhimers, where Guthrie got his first real break. When Thalhimers VP Newman Hamblet tasted Guthrie's delectable fried chicken in 1963, he was such a fan that he added it to the menu at the store's restaurant, the Richmond Room. Four years later, Thalhimers and Guthrie drew up a \$70 million agreement to franchise the business, and in 1968 the first location opened its doors right here in Richmond.

From then on, under Guthrie's own tagline, "Tender as Quail, Tasty as Pheasant," business boomed for Golden Skillet, with stores opening in Virginia, North Carolina and Washington, D.C. By the 1970s, Golden Skillet >



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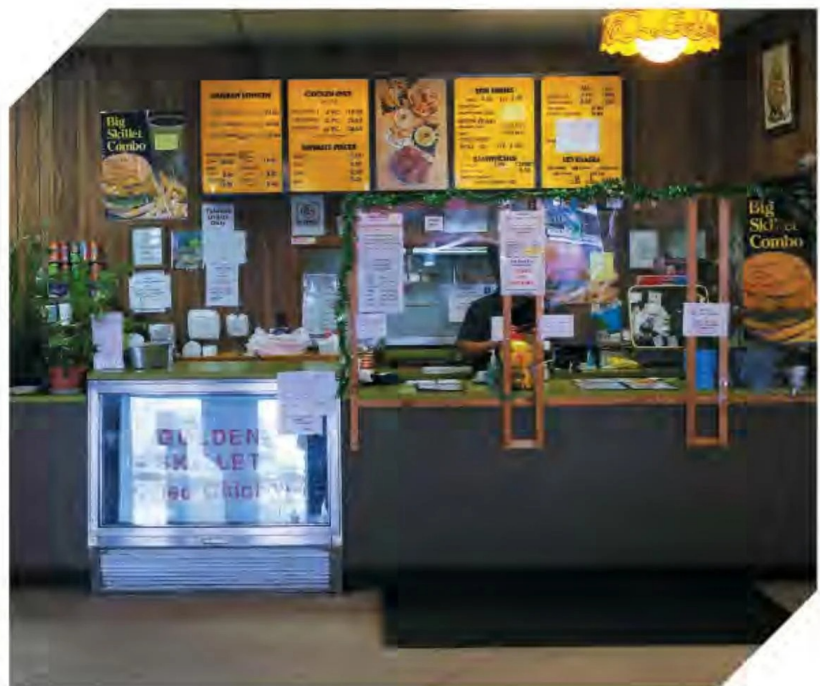
was on a path to global expansion. Guthrie bought the rights to further franchise the business from Thalhimers and eventually bought back the original franchise locations, too.

Guthrie loved to travel, especially to Japan, and over the next decade he would go on to open spots throughout the U.S., including Puerto Rico, and in Japan and Canada (where, due to trademark issues, it was called Mary Brown's, to honor Guthrie's late wife). Golden Skillet grew to over 200 locations globally.

As a young girl, Castanien didn't concern herself with the ins and outs of the business, but her mother and her many uncles knew it well. Guthrie helped each of them establish themselves in the corporation. Castanien's mother, Anne Guthrie Causey, served as corporate bookkeeper and owned two franchise locations, while Guthrie's youngest son Phillip took on the role of vice president of purchasing before becoming a minister in the 1970s. Guthrie's second oldest son Joe, who enjoyed an especially close relationship with his father, eventually became franchise director and heir to Guthrie's fortune.

But Castanien fondly remembers the grand openings of locations on Broad Street, and she recalls in vivid detail the Golden Skillet on Belt Boulevard, where she worked for a time. "There were booths in the front, and you had to sit down and wait because they would make the chicken [to order]," Castanien says. "Behind the counter, there was a glass case [with] coleslaw and pudding, macaroni salad, and potato salad. Then there was another counter and, behind that, the kitchen." Castanien says they would brine the chicken in salt water for hours in the big walk-in fridge. Next,

Right: Counter at the Jahnke Road Golden Skillet; Below: The Chanello's sign at 2003 W. Broad St. is a former Golden Skillet sign that has been repurposed.



it would be dipped into a wet batter and then a dry mixture before being lowered into the pressure cooker — first thighs, then legs, followed by breasts and finally wings — to be fried in pure peanut oil.

After Guthrie's death in 1981, the Golden Skillet Corporation was purchased by Dairy Queen International. Rather than opening more stores, the acquisition seems to have been a tactic to help secure DQ's position as the eighth-ranked fast-food chain in the United States at the time, and from then on, the stores began to slowly fade away, one by one.

In 2021, the final remaining corporate store in Portsmouth, operated by Richard "Chicken Man" Oglesby for most of its 35-year run, shuttered. It was the last of Hampton Roads' 45 Golden Skillet locations. Now, just a handful of independently owned Golden Skillet locations have endured, including stores on Jahnke Road, where the dining room feels like a time capsule of the past; Williamsburg Road in Sandston; and Washington Street in Petersburg. While these businesses

use the name Golden Skillet, and rely on the recipes, each location operates autonomously and is not under ownership of the parent company.

Castanien remembers her grandfather as a bon vivant and a foodie before the term became popular. He would lavish his favored grandkids with gifts and gourmet food, particularly Castanien, who drove Guthrie around in his Cadillac Fleetwood after a stroke took him off the road. "He would take us into Safeway International, [and] he would just let you fill the cart up with all the expensive ingredients and go home and cook them. He was so much fun."

Castanien still doesn't know exactly what's in Golden Skillet's proprietary batter or dredging, though her brother claims he's cracked the code. But, she says, the Sandston location, one of just 10 Golden Skillet locations still operating in the country, makes a reliably familiar version of the longstanding recipe. "Still, at family gatherings and funerals," Castanien says, "we find a way to get the chicken and take it to the event." ■





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DOWN ON THE CORNER

Local stores that define our neighborhoods **BY LAUREN VINCELLI**

ONE WAY MARKET

404 N. First St.

In Jackson Ward, international and hard-to-find novelty snacks await. Helmed by Ervin Johnson, the store debuted in 2021. Score out-of-the-ordinary treats including Lay's IHOP Rooty Tooty Fresh 'N Fruity collab chips, BlackPink Oreos and Pokemon drinks hailing from Japan, Thailand, Canada and beyond.

STELLA'S GROCERY

Various locations, stellasgrocery.com

The Greek restaurant and grocery chain's namesake, Stella Dikos, was a beloved Richmond restaurateur and cook for over five decades. Her markets are where we turn for a taste of true home cooking. First opened in 2015, the seven area locations offer top-quality takeout including feta-brined rotisserie chickens and hearty dishes created from time-honored recipes. Stella's Grocery should also be in the rotation for family-style catering, a romantic portable picnic spread or comforting soups such as avgolemono, lamb lentil curry or Brunswick stew. Their espresso bars feature Illy cold brew, local ice cream, hefty salads from the Harvest Kale to Nonna's Chopped, spanakopita (fresh and frozen), souvlaki, rich tiramisu, and a range of sandwiches including the popular Peruvian chicken and the butternut squash panini.

YELLOW STORE

3163 Midlothian Turnpike

This recently renovated mega corner store in South Side is lauded for its cleanliness and its delicious and wallet-friendly (nearly everything is under \$10) scratch cooking. They get started at 6 a.m. daily and serve breakfast sandwiches, Philly-style subs and chopped cheeses, pizza by the slice, fried chicken livers, shrimp baskets, and more.

KRAMER'S MARKET

406 N. Cleveland St.

Though the tiny family-run market has been in biz for over 30 years, Augusto Maz and a partner purchased it in July 2024. The Museum District shop sells home essentials, along with plenty of craft beer, wine and fun novelty snacks. Look for Pocas bubble tea, canned cocktails, Nightingale Ice Cream sandwiches and a plentiful Haribo candy rack.



Above: Shields Market owner Tina Kafantaris says she leaves room on the shelves for special requests from neighbors. "The whole point of a neighborhood market is so you don't have to go all the way to Kroger or Target," she says.

SHIELDS MARKET

206 N. Shields Ave.

First opened in 1989 by owner Sam Patel, the convenience store has become a neighborhood fixture. Today, the market is managed by Tina Kafantaris, co-owner of the seminal family restaurant located opposite. "We'll even run across the street to Joe's [Inn] to grab you a carrot or a cup of ricotta if you're desperate," she says. That level of service has attracted lifelong loyal customers. A Shields Market secret: It's an oasis for entertaining. The shop features a curated charcuterie case with an impressive assortment of chocolates, cheeses, salumi, antipasto, dips and snacks. Beverages include over 150 wines, craft beer, nonalcoholic offerings and cocktail accoutrements, along with Rostov's Coffee, cold brew and kombucha on tap, and a walk-in beer cooler. You'll also find jars of the beloved marinara and salad dressing and other prepared foods from Joe's Inn.



CARY ST. MINI MART

1317 W. Cary St.

This locally owned shop is preferred in Randolph and Uptown for its service, options and prices. Amrinderpal Singh has owned it for two years, and sells a solid selection of snacks and affordable beer and wine. Look for Slush Puppies in the summer, a Bitcoin ATM and a slightly hidden mural of Johnny Z on the back wall that was painted when that building was Chop Suey Books.

OAXACA LATIN MARKET

610 N. Sheppard St.

Open since 2006, this peach-colored storefront has established itself as a place to find Latin American specialty groceries, produce, beers, tinned foods, fresh bread and tortillas, and it's stocked with a fantastic selection of spices. Peek in the case of paletas (ice pops) from Richmond-based frozen treat purveyors La Michoacana.

PATTERSON MINI MARKET

3100 Patterson Ave.

At the corner of Patterson Avenue and Belmont Street in the Museum District, this market is a necessary pit-stop after a night out in the Devil's Triangle, open daily until midnight. Come here for bags of ice and a wide range of suds and wine. Situated between Black Hand Coffee and Belmont Pizzeria, it's perfect for a snack-and-shop twofer.

STRAWBERRY STREET MARKET

415 Strawberry St.

Strawberry Street Market has been a mainstay for over 20 years, making it a favorite on the tiny, idyllic block where village life takes over the Fan. At the market, cashier Debbie Raines is a familiar face, having helmed the register for nearly a decade. Raines says neighbors love their big assortment of wine and beer, but the real standout is the food of chef Pho Nhong. The Cambodian culinary whiz has been cooking for the Strawberry Street brand for over 20 years, previously a crew member at the former cafe next door. Now, she stocks the hot bar — tucked into the back of the market — with Southern delights including juicy fried chicken and seasoned potato wedges. Find everything from fresh-cut fruit, prepared salads, sandwiches and deli items to grocery staples, pet food, toiletries and hundreds of cold beverages. In true there-for-you fashion, the market is open 365 days a year from 7 a.m. to midnight.

Above: Strawberry Street Market don't-miss items are chef Nhong's chicken noodle soup and creamy clam chowder. *Below:* Union Market throws an annual birthday block party each October.

LOMBARDY MARKET

201 N. Lombardy St.

Since 1981, R.E. Watkinson has operated this longstanding Fan store. Chances are you've eyed the sign out front advertising "The Best Deviled Eggs in Richmond." A beacon for local brands, they offer beans from Richmond Coffee Company, tubs of She-Crabby soup from Tarrant's and burritos from Sous Casa. Prepared food musts include chocolate muffins, chicken salad sandwiches and, of course, their two-pack paprika-spiced deviled eggs.

UNION MARKET

2306 Jefferson Ave.

Ten-year-old Union Market has earned a rep for showcasing local purveyors. With a walk-up window and dog-friendly outdoor patio, Union is a home base for nearby residents. They also whip up vegan and vegetarian options with finesse, including a bangin' tempeh banh mi. ■



FARMERS MARKETS

Shop local around the region

17th Street Market

Open-air plaza featuring a regular market and events. 100 N. 17th St. 804-646-0954 or facebook.com/17thstreetmarket

Ashland Farmers Market

Hanover-grown produce, honey, flowers and more. 9 a.m. to noon Saturdays, May–October; holiday markets November–December. 121 Thompson St. 804-798-9219 or ashlandva.gov

Birdhouse Farmers Market

Local fruits, vegetables, meats, breads and more. SNAP accepted. 3 to 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays, May–November. 1507 Grayland Ave. 804-261-0841 or birdhousefarmersmarket.org

Carytown Farmers Market

Locally grown produce, flowers and freshly made foods. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sundays, May–October. City Stadium, 3201 Maplewood Ave. 804-402-9076 or carytownmarket.com

Chesterfield County Farmers Market

Local fruits, vegetables, plants, desserts and crafts on the Chesterfield County Government Complex grounds. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesdays, May–September. 6701 Mimms Loop. 804-751-4401 or facebook.com/chesterfieldvafarmersmarket

Colonial Heights Farmers Market

Local produce, grass-fed meats, eggs, plants and more. 9 a.m. to noon Saturdays, year-round.

2600 Boulevard, Colonial Heights. 804-721-3256 or facebook.com/colonialheightsfarmersmarket

Dorey Park Farmers Market

Local produce, meats, baked goods, jams, handmade items and more. 9 a.m. to noon Saturdays, June–October. 2999 Darbytown Road. 804-314-9739 or doreyparkfarmersmarket.org

Farmers Market At St. Stephen's

Outdoor market hosted by St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. 8 a.m. to noon Saturdays, April–November; 9 a.m. to noon Saturdays, December–April. SNAP program accepted. 6000 Grove Ave. 804-288-2867 or ststephensva.org

Goochland Farmers Market

Local produce and goods, music and food trucks. SNAP program accepted. 4 to 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays, May–October. 1889 Sandy Hook Road. 804-314-9141 or rvagriculture.org

Huguenot-Robious Farmers

Outdoor Market

Virginia-grown market featuring produce, meat and crafts. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursdays, year-round. The Great Big Greenhouse, 2051 Huguenot Road. 804-320-1317 or meadowsfarms.com

Lakeside Farmers' Market

Year-round market featuring local produce, meat, cheese and crafts. 9 a.m. to noon Saturdays and Wednesdays. 6110

Lakeside Ave. 804-262-6593 or lakesidefarmersmarket.net

Latino Farmers Market

A Saturday market held in Rockwood Park from April–November highlighting Latin producers, growers and makers. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 3401 Courthouse Road. 703-987-8299 or facebook.com/LatinoMarketVA

Manakin Market

Produce, local products, kids' activities, music and more. SNAP program accepted. 9 a.m. to noon Saturdays, May–October. 68 Broad Street Road or rvagriculture.org

The Market At Magnolia Green

Local produce and handmade goods every Saturday, May–September. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 17320 Hull Street Road, Moseley. 804-818-6900 or magnoliagreen.com/the-market

New Kent County Farmers Market

Producer-only market with produce, cut flowers, eggs, meats and more. 9 a.m. to noon Saturdays, May–August. 7589 New Kent Highway. 804-557-3200 or newkentfarmersmarket.com

Northside Farmers Market

This market aims to increase healthy food access and highlights Black growers. SNAP accepted. 4:30 to 7 p.m. Thursdays, June–November. 201 E. Brookland Park Blvd. (behind Richmond Community High School). northsidefoodaccess.com

Powhatan Village Farmers Market

Produce and local products. SNAP accepted. 4 to 6:30 p.m., Thursdays, May–September. 3841 Old Buckingham Road or rvagriculture.org

RVA Big Market

More than 80 full-time and 50 part-time vendors. Saturdays, 8 a.m. to noon (May–October); 9 a.m. to noon (November–April). Bryan Park, 4308 Hermitage Road or growrva.com

RVA Black Farmers Market

Features Black-owned farms, purveyors and makers. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. 2nd and 4th Sundays, June–November. 1311 Westwood Ave. rvablackfarmersmarket.com

Scott's Addition Farmers Market

An indoor-outdoor market featuring local produce, makers and coffee. Wednesdays at The Workshop, year-round. 1400 Mactavish Ave. theworkshopbytd.com

South of the James Market

Farmers, artists, local food products and food trucks. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sundays, year-round. Forest Hill Park, 4021 Forest Hill Ave. (42nd Street entrance). growrva.com

West End Farmers Market

Local produce, herbs, eggs, honey and artisan products. 9 a.m. to noon Saturdays, year-round. Discovery United Methodist Church, 13000 Gayton Road. 804-637-5586 or westendfarmersmarket.com ■



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Gelati Celesti — Swift Creek 13487 Hull Street Road, 804-886-9111

Happy Yappy Bubble Tea & Froyo Ice Cream 11500 Midlothian Turnpike, 804-482-0555

Jimer's Frozen Custard 20800 Hull Street Road, Moseley, facebook.com/@Jimersfrozencustard

Kline's Dairy Bar 15589 Cosby Road, 804-250-1898

La Michoacana 7808 Midlothian Turnpike, 804-320-0788

La Michoacana 9110 Richmond Highway, 804-275-0011

The Treat Shop — Midlothian 14736 Village Square Place, 804-608-0181

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DR. GLORIA WARD

Dr. Gloria Ward earned her first D.D.S. and Master of Science Degree in Periodontal Prosthesis from CES University in Colombia, South America. She moved to Virginia in 1999 and obtained a Master of Science in Dental Materials and earned her second D.D.S. degree from VCU in 2003. Her main focus of practice is dentures, implant restorations and cosmetics. Dr. Ward is certified in oral conscious sedation and speaks Spanish fluently. She also has a special interest in sleep apnea. Visit advanceddentistryva.com and 804-270-7940 to learn more.

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Dr. Holly Lewis is a board-certified pediatric dentist specializing in dental care for children of all ages. She is the founder and owner of Sparkle Pediatric Dentistry, with offices in Short Pump and Hanover. Dr. Lewis has served as the president of the Virginia Society of Pediatric Dentistry and has been recognized with numerous awards for her clinical excellence. She and the other providers at Sparkle are committed to improving the lives of our patients and continuing to gain the latest skills in dentistry, including cosmetic treatment, frenectomies and myofunctional therapy. Please visit pediatricdentistryrichmond.com.

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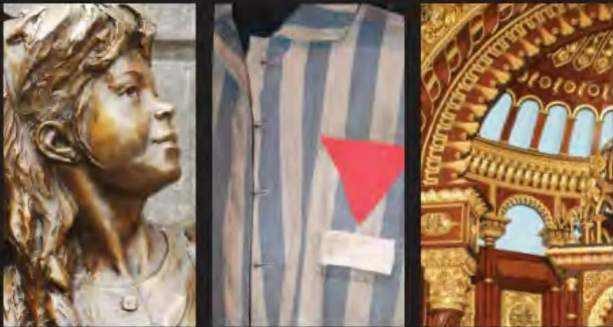
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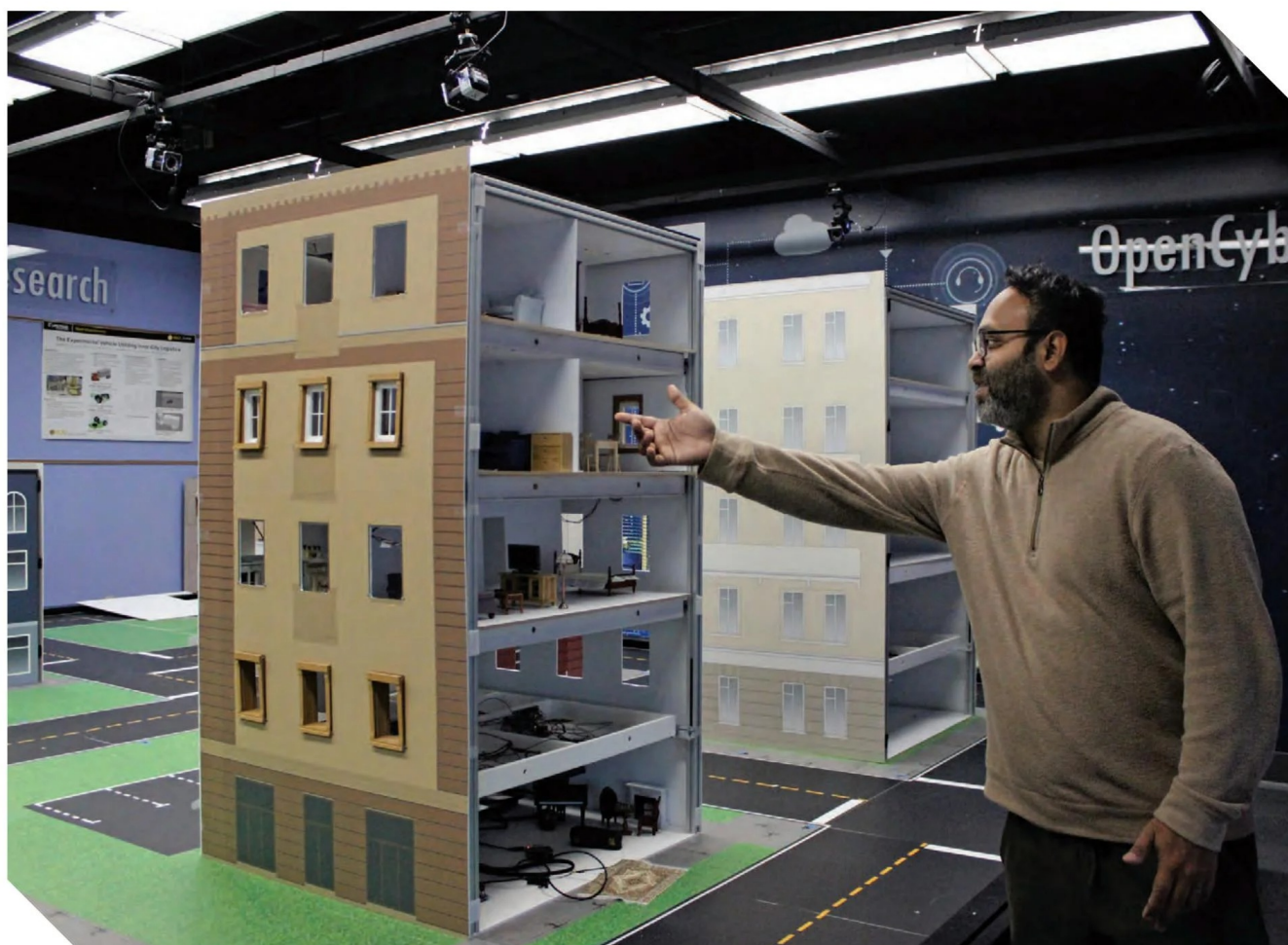
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THE CITY OF THE FUTURE is here, and it's located inside a classroom at Virginia Commonwealth University

OpenCyberCity, a realistic 1:12 scale model of a bustling downtown, allows College of Engineering students to test tiny drones, autonomous vehicles, manufacturing robots, smart devices and more under the tutelage of the city's director, electrical and computer engineering professor Sherif Abdelwahed. The model city was built in 2022, and about 40 students have used it since then.

"The idea is to have this for education as well as research," Abdelwahed says. "We're getting [students] as close [to] a hands-on experience as possible, as you're going to use the same technology, the same equipment, the same stuff that we use, but at the small scale."

Camera readings provide data akin to GPS, and sensors report temperature, humidity and other environmental factors needed to perfect the programming, all of which are displayed on a large monitor. Raspberry Pi computers can then

receive and execute commands, such as lowering a room's temperature to make it more comfortable and to reduce energy costs. In addition to a residential structure, students are building a hospital, an office building and a manufacturing warehouse with two robotic arms and a conveyor belt.

The technology of OpenCyberCity is already being used in cities across America and Europe. The city of Richmond, Abdelwahed says, is currently focusing on implementing air pollution, air quality and traffic systems.

Among other things, students are developing emergency response systems. "The idea here," Abdelwahed says, "is to help to utilize drones, if there is a car accident or some kind of emergency, to deliver needed equipment there, even before the emergency service will be able [to arrive]," giving the Los Angeles fires as an example where the technology can be used. "This is something exciting that will have a large impact on reducing the fatalities and the losses that come out of these kinds of emergencies." —**Mark Newton**

Mostafa Zaman, a Ph.D. candidate, discusses the 1:12 scale OpenCyberCity at VCU's College of Engineering.



See more photos taken around Richmond at [instagram.com/richmondmag](https://www.instagram.com/richmondmag).

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